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GIFT OF

Mr. Edward A. Wicher

Charles Paul de Kock at thirty years of age.
PHOTOGRAVURE FROM MINIATURE BY DE MARICOT.

The Works of

CHARLES PAUL DE KOCK

With a General Introduction by

JULES CLARETIE

THE CHILD OF MY WIFE

Translated into English by

EDITH MARY NORRIS

THE FREDERICK J. QUINBY COMPANY

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE portrait of Charles Paul de Kock which embellishes this volume is engraved from a miniature by Maricot, whom Paul de Kock, writing of the time of his first book, "The Child of My Wife," describes as "one of my most intimate friends." This was in 1811, but the portrait was not painted until 1823, and represents the writer as a handsome young man of thirty.

"The Child of My Wife" is called by De Kock, "my first and feeblest romance," is assuredly surpassed by many of his later works, and serves to mark the growth of the writer's genius. It was written when De Kock was but seventeen years of age, and when he was employed as a banker's clerk in the house of Shérer and Finguerlin. The discovery of the manuscript by his employer led to his dismissal, which was doubtless a turning point in his career, and incidentally urged him into the flowery paths of literature. But the blossom of his fame and popularity had not even budded as yet, though the harvest was to be so plentiful later on.

He took the manuscript home, and after the manner of young authors tried it first upon his confiding family, who in this case would none of it.

"Pooh!" said his mother, when he offered to read it to her; "Your romance, a pretty thing, indeed! Some rhapsody, I suppose; you had much better try to obtain advancement in your office than to write such foolish things."

Vainly he sought a publisher for this bantling of his brain. He was sent from one to the other and received in a variety of ways; but all were unanimous in refusing to have anything to do with "The Child of My Wife." In his own inimitably humorous way he tells of what must have been a bitter disappointment to the ambitious youth of seventeen. At last he tried to get it published by a bookseller, one Quoy.

"One day," he writes, "in an access of rage I thrust 'The Child of My Wife' at Quoy's throat.

"'But I am not a publisher.'

"'You will publish it. An edition of "The Child of My Wife" or your life.'

"Quoy had fallen at my knees. For a moment I was dizzy; my manuscript suspended above his head threatened him. Happily a customer entered the shop:

"'"The Mysteries of Udolpho," if you please, monsieur.'

"Ann Radcliffe had saved Quoy, and, trembling still at the thought of the crime I had been about to commit, I went home and threw my child to the bottom of a cupboard.

"It slept there for two years. I regret that it had not slept there forever."

Two years later he published it at his own expense, but it sold very slowly, and its author debated whether it were worth while to write books if people would not read them. A literary friend suggested that he should write for the theatre; his first play was very successful, then came his second romance, which was no less so. "'Georgette,' he writes, "commenced to draw me from the shade. Between ourselves, 'The Child of My Wife' had left me entirely obscured in it."

TRANSLATOR.

CHAPTER I

A Journey. An Accident. Adventures

"We shall never arrive at our destination, we shall never get to Strasburg this evening, Mullern," exclaimed Colonel von Framberg impatiently; "I do wish you would tell the postilion to lash up those sorry steeds of his and put a little life into them."

"That's something I have already told him to do twenty times at least during the past hour, Colonel," responded the person addressed; "and he invariably answers that unless we want to get all three of our necks broken we cannot go any faster."

"I greatly fear Henri will have left Strasburg by the time we reach there, Mullern," said the colonel.

"Then, Colonel," responded Mullern, "in that case we must continue to follow him."

"And, perhaps," added the colonel, "we shall not come up with him in time to prevent the misfortune which I fear."

"Should that happen, Colonel, you will have nothing with which to reproach yourself, for truly, during the last six weeks we have done nothing

but post day and night, from Framberg to Strasburg, from Strasburg to Paris, and from Paris back to Framberg."

"If we can but attain the object of our journey!"

"If I only had a bottle of good wine to dispel the numbness of my limbs; but we can get nothing; not even a glass of thin wine to appease the thirst which consumes me. O Colonel, only for your sake would I endure patiently so much discomfort."

"Are you sorry that you came with me, Mullern?"

"I would go to the end of the world with you, Colonel; but I should wish, at least, not to do so without eating or drinking."

Here the conversation was interrupted by a tremendous shock, which broke the axle-tree of the post-chaise, and Colonel Framberg and his travelling companion both rolled into a ditch which bordered the road. This accident was due to the fact that the postilion had not, owing to the rapidity of his course, noticed the ditch into which our travellers had fallen.

While the postilion was occupied with his horses, Mullern ran to pick up the colonel.

"Thousand million of cartridges! are you wounded, Colonel?"

"It's nothing, Mullern; it's only my left leg which pains me a little."

"Hang it! You're tremendously bruised."

"It is nothing, I tell you. Let us try to discover some place where we can pass the night, for I see very well that we must renounce the hope of arriving at Strasburg today."

The postilion came running to tell the gentlemen that there was an inn about fifty paces from them.

"You scoundrel! to dare to upset Colonel Framberg in a ditch," said Mullern to the postilion.

The latter excused himself as best he could, and they took their way to the inn, supporting the colonel by the arms.

Our travellers had walked but a few minutes when they saw an unpretentious but pretty little house. It comprised a groundfloor, a first story, and some attics, and was provided with green shutters to ward off the sun. A cluster of oaks shaded the entrance, and everything about it indicated that its master, tired of the pleasures and noises of the city, had retired to this solitude for rest and meditation.

"You call that an inn?" said Mullern to the postilion; "I believe, triple thunder! that you want to make the colonel walk."

"Let us knock, at any rate," answered the postilion; "we shall see better what it is when we are inside."

Mullern rapped a double knock at the door. No answer. He knocked again; but still there was no response. To complete the awkwardness

of the situation, darkness came on rapidly, and Colonel Framberg's wound, irritated by fatigue, began to pain him horribly.

"The devil's in this, colonel; you can't sleep in the open air in your condition. Since the people in the house are deaf, we must try to manage without them."

So saying, Mullern violently kicked in the window of the groundfloor which was nearest to the door. The shutter, which was not in condition to sustain such an assault, broke and fell at his feet. He then broke two panes of glass with his sabre, and entered the house without paying any attention to the orders of his colonel, who pointed out to him that he should not thus violate people's rights, and that if any one saw him they would be more likely to take him for a highway robber than for a sergeant-major of cavalry.

Without pausing in his enterprise, Mullern ran to the entrance, found a large key hung on the door, took it down, opened the door without difficulty, and introduced Colonel Framberg into the abandoned house.

"Now that we are inside," said the colonel, "let us try to conduct ourselves circumspectly."

"That's it, Colonel, give your arm to this awkward postilion, and I'll precede you so as to warn you in case of accident."

Our travellers proceeded, groping their way, for the darkness was so intense they could not

discern a step before them. They had already passed through several of the rooms when something passed before them and fled lightly at their approach. Mullern, puzzled, without pausing to think, ran after this object, but his feet caught in a footstool, he lost his equilibrium and fell with his head in a bucketful of water. He rose angrily, opened a door, and, thinking he was walking on the level, rolled from the top to the bottom of some stairs, drawing with him in his fall an unfortunate cat, which was the innocent cause of all this rumpus. However, though half stunned by his rapid descent, Mullern arose and proceeded, this time more carefully, to examine the place into which he had tumbled. The dampness of the atmosphere, and several bottles which he felt under his hand, soon apprised him that he was in the cellar. Reassured by this discovery he sought the stairs which he had descended so rapidly, that he might go up again to announce his success to the colonel; but for the third time his feet caught in something, and he fell with his face on the nose of an individual who was tranquilly sleeping, and who gave utterance to a terrible shout on being awakened so suddenly.

CHAPTER II

The Counts von Framberg. Clémentine

We must not pause to draw our friend Mullern from the embarassment caused by his new adventure until we have performed an obviously necessary task in informing the reader as to the identity of Colonel Framberg, and in dilating upon the motive which had occasioned his hurried journey.

Count Hermann von Framberg, the colonel's father, was descended from an ancient German family. From father to son, through many generations, the Frambergs had passed their youth in serving their country as officers in the army. Count Hermann, following the example of his forefathers, having plucked the laurels of glory on the field of honor, had retired to his ancestral estates, and there, with a dearly beloved wife, had impatiently awaited the birth of their child to complete his happiness. The moment arrived, but the day of joy was turned into one of mourning and affliction; the countess died in giving birth to her son.

The count was never entirely consoled for his loss, but as time softened the bitterness of his

anguish he remembered that he had a son, and ardently gave himself up to the care of his education, which resembled that of his ancestors. Young Framberg early excelled in military exercises; his father saw with joy the taste which he evinced for the profession of his forebears, and at the age of fifteen the young man asked permission to enter the army. The count, although regretting the separation from his son, consented to this request, and young Framberg left the house of his fathers, and in a short time rose by his brave conduct to the rank of colonel.

Count Hermann was proud of such a son, and when Colonel Framberg came to make his winter quarters at his father's castle, he was received with all the military honors, as well as with paternal tenderness.

It was on the battlefield that the colonel had made Mullern's acquaintance. That brave hussar was conspicuous for his courage, and even more so for the singularity of his humor; he had all the frankness and bluntness of a good soldier; always ready to risk his life for a person whom he loved, he would have gone round the world in order to punish one who had affronted him. He revered his colonel as his superior, and loved him as the bravest man in the army; in every battle he was at the colonel's side, fought before him and often made a rampart for him with his body; and had anyone given his life to save the colonel's,

the good Mullern would never have forgiven his depriving him of the honor and pleasure of so doing.

The colonel, for his part, became more and more attached to Mullern. Soon they became inseparable, for the colonel, educated in camps, knew nothing of the distinctions which rank and fortune impose in society. The one whom he loved, although without wealth or title, was none the less estimable in his eyes, if he possessed qualities which made his friendship desirable. In a word, the colonel was above all prejudice, and frequently ruptured social convenances, as the sequel of this history will demonstrate.

Count Hermann, as he became old, ardently desired that his son should give him an heir to his name, and on each visit which the colonel paid to the castle, where for a long time past Mullern had accompanied him, the old count renewed his entreaties that his son would marry. But the pursuit of glory alone occupied the colonel's mind, and he refused to gratify his father's wishes, until, on attaining his thirtieth year, his warlike ardor became a little diminished, and he consented to yield to the count's desire.

About half a league from Count Hermann's castle the domains of Baron von Frobourg were situated. The baron was a widower, and lived a retired life in his castle, occupied with the education of his only daughter, little Clémentine, who

was the idol of her father, and the object of his dearest hopes.

The count and the baron, being near neighbors, early became intimate, and passed their time alternately at each other's houses, and during the winter evenings they conversed; one recounting the military achievements and the glory with which his son had embellished his old age, the other detailing the infantile graces of his daughter, her filial love, her sensitive feeling for the unfortunate, and his hope that one day, possessing the beauty of her mother, she would also possess her virtues. However, time passed, and the count imparted to the baron his desire to see his son married, and the baron confided to his friend the fears which agitated him when he reflected that, if he should die, he would leave his daughter alone in the world, without a friend to protect her or a husband to cherish her. These confidences led to an inevitable result; the count and the baron formed the project of uniting their children. By this means they welded more firmly the friendship which united them, and put an end to all the anxiety which incessantly troubled their old age.

It was at this epoch that the colonel yielded to his father's desires, and the latter conducted him to the baron's castle that he might become acquainted with his future wife.

The colonel, in his frequent visits to his home, had already seen Clémentine, but what a differ-

ence! she had been a child then, and time had not developed all her graces. When the count presented his son to her as her future husband, she was eighteen years old; she was pretty without being beautiful; but her every movement awakened delight; her big black eyes had a most tender and languorous expression, and the enchanting accents of her voice stirred the hearts of those who listened to her with the deepest emotion. Clémentine's character did not belie the sweetness of her expression; she was endowed with every good quality, but she carried her sensibility to an excess. This feeling, when she possesses too much of it, is often the cause of a woman's misfortune, and sometimes leads her much farther than she wishes or intends.

The colonel, on seeing Clémentine, experienced that secret delight which the presence of a charming woman occasions, and he ardently hoped that he should soon call her his wife; not that he felt for her the violent passion which is capable of every sacrifice in order to possess the beloved object. Colonel Framberg, educated in the camp, had never known love, and his brusque frankness was rather that of a friend than that of a lover; but he was proud of his father's choice, and gratified in that he was able to reconcile his desires and his duty.

As to Clémentine, when the old baron apprised her that she must consider Colonel Framberg as

her future husband, she turned pale, she was distressed, and she threw herself at her father's knees and begged him not to force her to leave him. The baron told her that he would always live with her. Besides, it was necessary that she should have a protector, a second father, to replace him when he should go down to the grave, and he could not find a man worthier to fulfil all these duties than Count Hermann's son. Finally, the baron told his daughter that he had placed his dearest hopes on this marriage, and that she would sadden his old age if she refused to obey him. Clémentine was silent, tried to hide her fears, and promised her father that she would comply with his wishes; however, she obtained from the baron a delay in order, said she, that she might have time to become acquainted with her future husband, and it was decided that they should be married at the end of three months.

Whence came Clémentine's trouble on learning of her approaching marriage? If the colonel had not that soft and tender tone which one desires in a lover, at least, he was possessed of the most excellent qualities; besides, the pleasure of obeying her father should have enabled Clémentine to contract the marriage he had proposed for her without sorrow. There must be, then, some secret motive which disturbed her peace of mind. What that was, we shall learn, without doubt, in the following pages.

Not far from the baron's castle, in a modest little cottage surrounded by a pretty garden, and situated on a hill from whence one could view the rich domains of the Frobourgs, lived Clémentine's old nurse, who had always evinced for her charge the tenderness of a mother, and had lavished upon her all her care. For her part, Clémentine loved Nurse Germaine, and never passed a day without going to see her.

One beautiful evening in spring Clémentine left the castle to go to the cottage. The weather had never been so beautiful; a soft and pure air intoxicated the senses, and the declining sun seemed to leave with regret the scene to which he had lent his dawning glory.

Clémentine, led by an irresistible desire, went deep into the woods through which it was necessary to pass in order to reach Germaine's cottage. Presently, feeling tired, she seated herself at the foot of a tree, and gave herself up to the sweet reflections inspired by the silence of her resting-place. She had been seated thus for some time when a gun was fired sufficiently near to dispel her revery. She turned quickly and saw a young huntsman. The young man remained motionless at the sight of Clémentine and, in place of excusing himself for the fright he had caused her, did nothing but look at the charming person who was before his eyes.

Clémentine was the first to perceive the singu-

larity of their position, and was about to depart when the young man, running to her, retained her gently by the arm.

"Why, mademoiselle, have I frightened you?"

"It was not you, monsieur, it was your gun?"

"Pray excuse me. I had not seen you, and certainly had I been aware of your presence I should no longer have found it possible to shoot."

"I am sorry, monsieur, to have disturbed your pleasure."

"O mademoiselle, I would willingly give up all other pleasures for the one which I feel at this moment."

Clémentine blushed, the young man remained silent, and they again stood motionless before each other. It was growing dark, however, and Clémentine turned to leave.

"You are going, mademoiselle?"

"Yes, monsieur, night is approaching, and it is time for me to return to the castle."

"Mademoiselle lives at the Castle von Frobourg?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Will mademoiselle permit me to conduct her home?"

"It is unnecessary, monsieur, I know the way very well."

So saying, Clémentine lightly departed, leaving the young man to follow with his eyes her passage through the skirts of the wood. Clémentine

entered the castle all out of breath. It was the first time that she had passed a whole day without visiting her nurse. She forgot everything in thinking of the meeting in the woods; in vain she tried to drive from her mind the idea which occupied it. The image of the young hunter presented itself unceasingly to her mind, and filled her thoughts with an uneasiness which she could not explain.

The next day Clémentine started from the castle at the same hour as on the previous evening, to visit nurse Germaine's cottage. However, despite her secret desire to again meet her unknown acquaintance, she refrained from loitering in the woods, and went straight to her nurse's dwelling. The good old woman, after scolding her young lady for not coming as usual on the preceding day, made her sit down, and invited her to partake of some fruit and some milk. Clémentine was not in her usual calm and cheerful frame of mind; a secret uneasiness agitated her, a new feeling had been awakened in her breast. Her good nurse perceived the change in her manner and asked her what could be the cause of it, and Clémentine, who had nothing to hide, told of her meeting of the evening before and of the subject which occupied her, things which any other than she would never have dared to relate. While it is true that kindness and familiarity lead to confidence, it is often the respect which one

bears to his parents which is the cause of one's restraint towards them.

Germaine, who saw nothing singular in this meeting, and did not foresee its consequences, was astonished at Clémentine's agitation. They were still speaking on this subject when somebody knocked at the door. A beating of the heart warned Clémentine that the knock was for her. Germaine opened the door and the young man of the wood came into the cottage. He smiled on seeing Clémentine, who blushed and trembled. Nurse Germaine, astonished, stood agape, looking at the pair, and still holding the door half open, not knowing whether she should be silent or speak.

As a slight pretext for his visit, he told Germaine that the hunt had drawn him out of his way towards the close of the day, and that he was greatly embarrassed as to what he should do, when happily he saw the cottage. He begged her to be kind enough to give him a little milk and some fruit, having, he said, taken nothing since the morning. Then he turned towards Clémentine and bowed timidly to her, saying that he was happy that chance had permitted him to meet her again.

Clementine smiled in her turn, for a secret feeling caused her to divine that it was not chance which had led the young hunter there. As to Germaine, she understood that this was the one

whom her young lady, for so she designated Clémentine, had met the evening before, and she said to the young man that he could not have arrived at a more opportune moment, for Clémentine was speaking of him when he knocked. The young man looked tenderly at the young girl, Clémentine blushed; and Germaine, still more astonished, looked at them both. However, little by little, their constraint disappeared, confidence was established, and the young man, who greatly desired that he should be no longer a stranger to Clémentine, told them that he was French, that his name was D'Ormeville, that he had early lost his parents, and that, having but a small fortune, he had entered the service; that after fighting for some time with the French troops, he had had an affair of honor with one of his comrades, they had fought, and he had killed his adversary. The family of the latter was rich and powerful, D'Ormeville was without fortune and without protection, and had been compelled to fly in order to save his life. He had gone to Germany with the design of entering the Emperor's service, and during this journey had stopped for some time in a village situated near the baron's castle, and, while enjoying the pleasures of the chase, he had met the charming Clémentine.

The baron's daughter asked him with interest, if he was now assured of his safety. D'Ormeville answered that since he had been in Germany he

had feared nothing, and he added that his greatest desire was now to dwell for a long time in the place where she lived.

Thus this accidental encounter was the source of much evil to Clémentine. D'Ormeville obtained, at first with difficulty, permission to conduct Clémentine a part of the way home; in truth, Germaine was always with them, but is the presence of a third person sufficient to prevent the birth of love?

Clémentine did not fail to go every evening to the cottage, and, for his part, D'Ormeville was just as punctual. Nurse Germaine saw no harm in these young people, who were so congenial to each other, being often together; besides, D'Ormeville's kind and engaging manners had gained her friendship, and nobody, so she said, was better suited to her young lady.

Our young people soon understood each other. The language of the eyes no longer sufficed them, and one day, while Germaine was in the garden, D'Ormeville threw himself at Clémentine's feet and confessed his passion.

Had he not already divined what she would answer? They swore mutually that they would live for each other always, and that they would never cease to love. However, destiny, which does not always accord with our desires, seemed bound to cross those of our lovers. Clémentine confessed to D'Ormeville that her father did not like the

French, and that he would not readily consent to their union; D'Ormeville told her that he was going to enter the German army, and that that circumstance would perhaps incline her father more favorably towards him. Clémentine believed him; one believes so easily that which one wishes.

However, time passed and D'Ormeville, who should already have been with the army, could not resolve to separate from Clémentine. Every evening, seated around a table with Nurse Germaine, who listened to their talk, the young people enjoyed the sweet pleasure which one tastes in being near the beloved object, and all three of them, ordinarily, walked together as far as the gate of the castle park, where Clémentine left them, promising to return the next day.

One day it happened that Germaine, feeling ill, could not accompany Clémentine on her return. It was late; they had forgotten, while conversing on love, that the time was passing, and Clémentine could not return alone; it was necessary that she should accept D'Ormeville's escort. The evening was superb, and recalled to the young lovers the day of their first meeting. In passing near the wood they paused, a thousand delightful sensations seized their hearts. D'Ormeville pressed his sweetheart to his breast, Clémentine allowed him to caress her, and they both forgot the world and its convenances and dreamt of nothing but love.

As, unfortunately, the greatest pleasure is that which soonest fades, the illusion was dissipated, the feelings were calmed, and Clémentine saw with horror the abyss into which she had fallen. However, D'Ormeville was near her, he calmed her grief, dried her tears; that is so easy to a lover. Clementine smiled; when love remains after gratification one is still happy.

It was, however, necessary that they should separate; that was the cruelest part. At last Clémentine reëntered the little gate of the park, but how she trembled in passing through the apartments of the castle; with what embarrassment she met the author of her being. Ah, had the baron been but twenty years of age! But our parents are not, like us, in the passionate time of life, and that is why it is easy to hide from them that which agitates us.

The longer our lovers made love, the less D'Ormeville dreamt of departing, but at last a very natural, though very unexpected event, recalled him to his duty. Clémentine perceived that she was to become a mother. This news, which filled D'Ormeville with joy, made him, nevertheless, feel that it was time that he should take his part in the world. They agreed that D'Ormeville should immediately leave for the army. War was about to be declared between Russia and Austria; this was his opportunity to distinguish himself. Clémentine was to write to D'Ormeville all that

took place at the castle. They hoped that he would return before the birth of Clémentine's child, and on his return the lovers intended to throw themselves at the baron's feet, confess their fault, and obtain his forgiveness. This plan once settled, they thought of nothing but its execution. D'Ormeville parted from his sweetheart, not without shedding many tears, and Clémentine felt her strength abandon her as she parted from the one whom she regarded as her husband.

CHAPTER III

A Man in a Thousand. Henri's Education

It was some two months after D'Ormeville's hasty departure when the Baron von Frobourg announced to his daughter that he had arranged for her marriage, and that he desired her to look upon Colonel Framberg, the son of his old friend, as her future husband.

What could Clémentine say? what argument could she advance against the baron's proposition. She feared her father too much to dare to confess the fault of which she had been guilty, and we have already seen that all she could obtain was a delay of three months. She went to weep on the bosom of her good nurse, to whom she had long since confided all her grief. Old Germaine was helpless in the matter, and could do nothing except bid her take courage; but, to complete her misfortune, for nearly a month Clémentine had received no news whatever of D'Ormeville. What could have happened to him? was he a prisoner? had he been killed on the battlefield? All these alarming ideas served to awaken her keenest anxiety, and could only render her situation more terrible.

One evening when Count Hermann and his son were at the baron's, Mullern came in to give his colonel some news of the last engagement.

"Well, Mullern," said the colonel, "what is there new?"

"Why, Colonel, the enemy has had a pretty beating."

"Are you certain of that?"

"Yes, Colonel, an old Frank who comes from the army told me about it. Triple cartridges! He said that the affair was very hot, the enemy made a valiant defence; at first they routed us, and of all the First Company of the 36th Hussars, not one escaped."

"What do you say?" cried Clémentine, "not even the officers?"

"O my God, not one! all of them remained on the field."

Clémentine heard no more, she fainted. They ran to help her, while Mullern, excited by the story of the battle, did not perceive the shock he had caused.

They carried Clémentine into her room, where she recovered her consciousness only to give herself up to the most bitter grief. It was in the First Company of the 36th Hussars that D'Ormeville had served; and the news she had now learned, added to the silence he had kept for so long a time, easily persuaded her that he had ceased to live. In truth, after this time no news

of D'Ormeville reached Clémentine, who passed her days in tears and in thinking of the one she had lost.

The three months' delay accorded to Clémentine was about to expire. She knew, also, that she would soon be a mother, and every day added to the embarrassment of her position. It was necessary to make some move, and Clémentine determined to take the only means which remained to taste, not happiness, that she had renounced since the death of him whom she adored, but at least the tranquillity and peace of mind of which she had been deprived for a long time.

Colonel Framberg's character, which Clémentine had fully appreciated, had inspired her with the idea of confessing to him her fault, and confiding in his generosity. One day, a short time before the date fixed for their marriage, Clémentine begged Colonel Framberg to grant her a moment's conversation, to which the colonel willingly consented. They went together into a retired part of the park, and there Clémentine confided to him her love and her misfortune. The colonel was stunned with amazement when Clémentine informed him that she was about to become a mother.

"Is it possible, madame," said he, "you whom I should have believed the most innocent of women?"

He paused; Clémentine colored with shame.

"Oh, forgive me, madame," said he, "I know nothing of love and am ignorant of the faults caused by it. But speak, give your orders, what do you desire of me? Your confidence deserves all my respect, it is a proof of your esteem for me, and I will prove to you that if Colonel Framberg cannot be your lover, he will at least, merit your friendship."

Clémentine, emboldened by this speech, told him that she had confided herself to his generosity, and that it was he who should decide her fate.

"Well, madame, since that is what you desire, if you will consent to it, we will change none of our plans. If he who possessed your love were still living, I should never propose to be your husband, that would be condemning you to eternal regret, but he is no more and you are to be a mother; your child will need a father. I will stand in that place to him, and I shall always have the same love for him that I should have for my own son."

"And you really consent to marry me, Colonel? Do you forget that prejudice, honor even, forbids this marriage?"

"I have no prejudice, and my honor, madame, is to help the unfortunate, and to act as a father to the orphan. It is for this reason that I wish to be your husband; and if, later on, anyone should blame my conduct, they cannot deprive me of the satisfaction of having acted as a gentleman."

"Oh, Colonel, what being could be bold enough to censure the conduct of a man who pleases himself only by doing good?"

"Besides, madame, since the convenances demand it, I will answer to you that the most profound secrecy shall cloak this event."

Thus ended the conversation, and a week later Clémentine became the colonel's wife. Had she not known D'Ormeville, this marriage would have made her happy, but the remembrance of him came incessantly to trouble her peace, and she fell into a deep melancholy which she tried in vain to hide from her husband. A month after the marriage Count Hermann died. Colonel Framberg grieved for his father as a tender son, and passed his time shut up with his wife, seeing no one but Mullern. It was at this epoch that the countess brought into the world a child, who was secretly baptized under the name of Henri d'Ormeville, but who was brought up by the colonel, and who passed as his son.

Old Baron von Frobourg, who was then at his castle, had no knowledge of this event, and he died a short time after his daughter's marriage without having discovered her secret.

Mullern was the only one who divined the truth, but he kept his reflections to himself, and said nothing to the colonel of that which he thought.

Little Henri became his mother's idol; in his

features she retraced those of the man to whom she had given her love. Had Clémentine had the happiness of bringing up her son, it is probable that our young hero would have possessed her sweet and loving qualities; but she died when he was not quite four years old, and was wept and regretted by all who knew her.

Colonel Framberg, heartbroken at the death of his wife, was compelled in order to distract his grief to absent himself for some time from the castle. He resolved to return to the army, but as little Henri had become very dear to him he wished to leave him with some one who would assiduously watch over his youth, and early inculcate virtuous principles. It was Mullern whom the colonel chose for this employment. He knew the former's loyalty and frankness, and sure that he would not leave his son — for it was thus that he called Henri — for an instant, he did not hesitate to make him the child's preceptor.

Mullern would much rather have followed his colonel to the army than have remained quietly at the Castle von Framberg, but as the wishes of his superior were paramount to him, he swore that he would faithfully fulfil them. The colonel then left the castle, leaving Mullern to govern it in his absence, and requesting him to make of Henri a brave and virtuous man.

Let us see how Mullern filled the office which was confided to him, the education of Clémen-

tine's son. He began by establishing himself in rooms next to those of his young pupil, and at dawn each day he went into Henri's room, drew him suddenly from his bed, dressed him, and took him out for a walk in the country, thinking that this exercise would render his pupil stronger and more robust.

On their return they breakfasted on some cold meat and wine, Mullern thinking that that would be better for the constitution than all the teas and coffees in the world. Perhaps he was not wrong, but I think at bottom that he was not reluctant to profit himself by this mode of breakfasting. After breakfast Mullern confided his pupil, for two hours only, to an old tutor who lived in the castle, and who was required to teach him writing and the languages. Mullern always recommended Henri not to rack his brains with the study of the sciences, because he thought it was more necessary for him to know how to draw his sword than to speak Latin; and the young man, sure of Mullern's approbation, sometimes threw his books at M. Bettemann's head, saying that they wearied him, and that he would much rather learn to fight. M. Bettemann scolded, but Mullern was delighted, and always put M. Bettemann in the wrong.

When this lesson was finished, Mullern seized Henri, led him into the court, placed him on a horse, and made the animal gallop for an hour

around the entrance to the castle. Thus, at ten years old, little Henri understood horses better than he understood the rudiments of grammar.

After this little diversion they passed to another still more important. It was necessary that he should exercise in fencing, in order to become a distinguished swordsman. It was in this occupation that Mullern excelled, and when he was satisfied with his pupil, he rewarded him by excusing him from his lesson with M. Bettemann on the next day.

After fencing they all three went to the table, and Mullern believed on principle in remaining there as long as possible, this being the only thing in which he agreed with M. Bettemann, who had the honor of dining with the gentlemen because Mullern was glad to find someone who could drink with him, while waiting until his pupil was big enough to get tipsy in his company.

Ordinarily after dinner these gentlemen were fit for nothing. M. Bettemann, in endeavoring to rival Mullern, always finished by disappearing under the table; and Mullern, having no longer anyone to talk to, went to sleep in the chimney corner, after smoking his pipe and singing a little military refrain. During the slumber of his preceptors, Henri did as he pleased, having nobody to watch him. He ran about in the house and gardens, went into the stable, untied the

horses, mounted them without saddle or bridle, and ravaged the garden by galloping to right and left in the paths, on the grass and in the spinach beds, in spite of the gardener's shouts, who was in despair at seeing that his vegetables would never come to maturity. One day, however, tired of seeing M. Henri destroy every evening his morning's work, the gardener resolved to revenge himself. Having laid his plans well, he bought some crackers, which he placed at the foot of a tree in a beautiful path which M. Henri was pleased to devastate very often, and making a train of powder from it to a bush where he hid himself, he tranquilly awaited the enemy, ready to apply the fire at the moment when he passed, very certain that at the sound of the explosion, the horse would play some trick with his rider.

The event justified all the gardener's hopes. As soon as Henri saw M. Bettemann under the table and Mullern asleep, he softly went down into the courtyard, ran to the stable, untied the best horse, and mounted his back, promising himself that on this day he would do even more damage to the borders and flower beds of the garden, than he had done on any preceding day. He then galloped towards the fatal path, but oh, unexpected misfortune! the explosion took place, the horse reared and threw his rider, who was himself too much frightened at the sudden sound to hold firmly on to his mount, and who was

flung to a distance of ten feet. The people of the castle came running at the cries of their young master, the gardener being one of the first to present himself. Someone ran to wake Mullern, and the latter, affrighted at the cries which came to his ears, suddenly overturned the table on M. Bettemann, and descended as quickly as possible to Henri's succor.

Our young man was more frightened than hurt. Except a few bruises he had nothing to cry for. However, questioned as to the cause of his fall, he told Mullern what had happened to him; and Mullern furious that anyone should have dared to make a snare for his pupil, swore that if he should discover the clown who had done it, he would take from him all desire to do such a thing again. All the servants protested their innocence, and everyone went into the castle, chatting about the event.

But another surprise was there prepared for them. At the foot of the stairs Mullern heard confused shouts coming from the room where they had dined. He went up four steps at a time, and found M. Bettemann floundering under the table between the bottles and plates, making every effort to withdraw his head from a punch bowl. He did so, finally, with the help of Mullern, though he was obliged to leave his wig in the burnt brandy. Peace being a little restored, everyone parted to go to bed.

Henri, somewhat chastened by his fall from the horse, for a time was a little more peaceable in his conduct, and contented himself with galloping around the court. The gardener felicitated himself on the success of his stratagem, and saw with delight his vegetables left to grow.

However, the effect of the fall wore off, little by little, and Henri began to be tired of the narrow limits of his ride. At last, his bruises being cured, he betook his way to the garden, and began to play the devil with the poor gardener. Mullern, who had not forgotten the affair of the crackers, and was extremely desirous of knowing who had placed them, was not long in conceiving a strong suspicion against the gardener, whose reiterated complaints had sufficiently shown his vexation. He resolved therefore to watch our man, and to endeavor to assure himself of the truth of his suspicions. The occasion was not long in presenting itself; the gardener, impatient at seeing that his remonstrances were without effect, resolved to renew his expedient, that he might altogether disgust young Henri with his horse riding, and this time, as he had no desire to repeat the experiment, he thought there would be no harm in tripling the dose in order that the detonation might be more efficacious.

But how could he do it? The little powder which he had been able to procure in the castle had been burned in the first explosion. On re

flection he thought that Mullern must have in his room a quantity more than sufficient for the execution of his plan, and he resolved to profit by the momentary absence of the hussar to take as much as was necessary for his purpose. Mullern soon came downstairs, and perceiving our man prowling around the castle, he pretended to depart without suspecting him; but after taking a few steps he softly turned and followed the gardener. The latter entered the room, took the quantity of powder which he wanted, and regained the garden, laughing in his beard at the new trick he was about to play our hussar's pupil.

But Mullern had seen all, and having acquired convincing proofs of the gardener's plot, he promised to draw therefrom a striking vengeance. Having well meditated his plan, he left the gardener to prepare everything to render an explosion effective, and waited impatiently the time for its execution.

At last the moment so much desired by the gardener and Mullern arrived. The former, having carefully prepared his fireworks, went to hide in the bush from whence he should put fire to the match. He had not long to wait. The gallop of a horse was heard. It drew nearer, and he immediately set fire to the train of powder. But, O surprise! O despair! he leaped far from his bush, raised by the force of the explosion, and fell on the grass, uttering shrill cries.

One cannot doubt that it was Mullern who had

cut the train of powder by another train, which ended at the bush where the gardener was hid, and which Mullern had arranged in such a manner as to take from him all desire to make other people jump.

As for the horse that had galloped by, he was unmounted. Mullern had taken care to warn his pupil of the snare which had been laid for him.

"So rascal, it was you, was it who wished to make your young master jump, because it pleased him to furrow your spinach with his horse's hoofs?"

"But Monsieur Mullern, it was for M. von Framberg's good I did it. What will our master say when he finds his garden in such a state."

"You should know, scoundrel, that my colonel loves his son much better than his vegetables, and that it is not for you to restrain him."

The gardener held his peace and went hobbling to his cottage, consigning young people, horses, and hussars to the devil. As to Mullern, proud of the success of his plan, he celebrated his victory glass in hand, and this time M. Bettemann passed the night under the table.

CHAPTER IV

The Farm and the Hayloft

Our hero's youth passed in the manner we have described until he attained the age of fifteen years. He continued to annoy and enrage all the inhabitants of the castle with his heedless tricks; but he had a perfect seat on horseback, and was nearly as good a swordsman as his master. Mullern swore by his mustaches that his pupil would yet do him honor.

At this period Henri looked a great deal older than he was, his physical appearance was that of a man, and his passions were even more fully developed than his physique. He was tall, well-built, his features were noble, his face was candid and agreeable in its expression, and he was as quick to excuse a fault in another as he was to commit one himself; he was brave, humane, sensitive; but headstrong, violent, impetuous in his desires, brusque in his actions, knowing neither restraint nor moderation. With such a character, he could not fail to evoke both favorable and unfavorable criticism. But life at the Castle von Framberg began to prove very wearisome to our young man, who ardently desired to travel and to

know the world. Every day Mullern inspired him with the hope that the colonel would return and that then they would change their manner of living, but time passed and the colonel did not come.

Henri, tired of riding his horse in the castle grounds, sometimes extended his gallops into the country, coming home only when fatigue forced him to take some repose. Mullern, who was no longer of an age to take pleasure in overworking, sometimes allowed his pupil to take his long rides alone; on condition, however, that he should always get back before night.

One day he started as usual, but the ordinary hour of his return passed and he did not arrive at the castle. Mullern, who was occupied in emptying an old bottle of rum with M. Bettemann, did not at first notice Henri's absence. However, as night advanced he asked if the young count had come in, and they told him no. He then began to feel some uneasiness, but he presumed that Henri, having gone farther than usual, had not foreseen that night would surprise him before arriving at the castle.

However, time passed, midnight struck and Henri did not appear. Mullern could no longer overcome his impatience, and fearing that some misfortune had happened to his dear pupil, he had a horse saddled and mounted, ordering the other servants to start off in different directions in search of their young master.

The weather was gloomy. Mullern allowed his horse to take the first road they came to and pressed his flanks in such a manner that he did not go to sleep. After galloping for a long time without discovering a living being, Mullern finally discerned a light in the distance and immediately directed his course towards it, hoping to learn something of the object of his search.

The light which Mullern had seen came from a little farmhouse sitting in the midst of fields. Mullern knocked rudely at the door and the barking of a great dog alarmed the household.

"Who is that knocking?" demanded a coarse voice from the groundfloor.

"Come, open the door, churl, and you will learn who it is."

"Open the door at this hour! Yes, I daresay, a pretty rogue you must be, to think we're going to let in a robber like that."

"Who are you calling 'robber'? I tell you, churl, that it is an old sergeant-major of cavalry, the tutor of Colonel Framberg's son, who does you the honor to come to your house."

"Come, get out, get away with your humbug!"

"Come, open the door, or I'll force the lock with my sabre."

"Oh, he's armed. Cæsar, Castor — seize him! Seize the rascal."

Saying these words the farmer opened the gate of the yard, and let out his two dogs, which

dashed at Mullern. The latter, furious that this peasant had not more respect for his title and quality, entered the yard on horseback, and with his sabre cut the head of the first dog who came at him, jumped off his horse, and dashed into the room where the farmer was, seeking something on which to wreak his vengeance. But the farmer, fearing to encounter this demoniacal man, fled to awaken the farm men, and the whole household. Mullern, whom nothing stopped, mounted a staircase, and then a second one, and reached the hay-loft; the door was shut. Presuming that his man had taken refuge there, he forced it open, entered, closed it tightly behind him, and groped about examining the place, where the deepest silence reigned. However, on turning the bundles of hay Mullern thought that he heard the sound of broken breathing; he advanced and felt softly around him, and was astonished to find a woman sitting quietly on the hay. How she came there we must inform the reader.

The farmer was a big, rotund man, who had been a handsome fellow in his time; but he was no longer in his first youth, and his wife, who was a chatty woman, of gay and cheerful temperament, finding he was no longer interested in any thing but his business, had become very friendly with her husband's farm hand, and had gone to the hay-loft to enjoy a chat with him, while the farmer was casting up the accounts of the day. On hear-

ing the barking of the dogs, the farm hand had warned his companion that something was passing below. The farmer's wife did not intend to disturb herself for such a trifle; but the young man, not caring to be surprised by his superior, left his sweetheart to go and see what was taking place. Mullern had just made his discovery, when he heard several men mounting the staircase.

"He is there," said the farmer to his men, "I am sure of it. Grosjean get your fork ready, and you, Pierre, take him by the middle of the body."

But Pierre, who was the bachelor in question, fearing that they would only find the farmer's wife in the loft, assured his master that the robber was not there, and that he had seen him escape into the cellar.

"That is all right," said the farmer, who had taken the death of his dog to heart; "still we'll go in, and if he's not here we can look for him elsewhere, afterwards."

While saying these words he began to batter on the door with the fork and broom. The farmer's wife, who recognized her husband's voice, whispered to Mullern to save himself without delay if he did not wish to be strangled by her husband. Mullern asked nothing better than to escape, rightly thinking that all his valor would be of no avail against the number with whom he would have to contend; but whence could he

fly? There was no way of leaving the garret except by the door, which was already guarded, and a window which looked on the yard. To jump out of the window would only be avoiding one peril to fall into another. If he hid himself in the bundles of hay they could not fail to find him. What should he do? Presence of mind was necessary to relieve him from this dilemma. The farmer's wife came to the rescue.

"What is it?" cried she; "my man, is it you who are there?"

"Wait, by jingo! It's Catherine. How did you come up here?"

"Hang it, it's very simple. When I heard the hubbub downstairs, I ran up to the loft for fear of robbers."

"Then the rascal I'm looking for isn't there."

"Do you suppose if he was I should be resting here so quietly? But wait, I'll come and open the door, and you shall see for yourself."

While saying this, the farmer's wife made Mullern hide, and she opened the door.

"Hang it, it's useless for me to look," said the farmer, "since you were here."

"Didn't I tell you I saw him escape into the cellar?" said Pierre.

"Oh, well then, let's go down, boys; I'll go and get my carbine, and, dang it, he'll pass a bad quarter of an hour.

Saying these words they all trooped down to

visit the cellar, and Mullern, who followed behind them, reached the yard, found his horse, mounted, and left the yard at a gallop. As day began to break Mullern thought it would be better for him to return to the castle, in case that Henri had returned during his absence. He could already distinguish in the distance the towers of the Castle von Framberg, when the sound of a horse's feet made him turn his head. He stopped, looked, and perceived Henri, who was coming quietly towards his preceptor.

"Ah, there you are, monsieur, I have found you at last. Isn't this a fine hour to be coming home to bed?"

"And you, my dear Mullern, where are you coming from? Ha, ha, ha! Where have you been among the hay to put yourself in such a state?"

In fact, Mullern, who had not had time to brush himself, was covered with hay from head to foot.

"Where am I coming from, monsieur? Hang it, in running after you I have done some fine business. I have broken into a house, killed the dog, beaten the farmer, and a moment later I should have been strangled, but for the pity of a woman who apparently thought I was too young to die, and who procured me the means of escape."

"Ah, my good Mullern, I am ashamed to be the cause of all that; but what put it into your head to run after me? I am no longer a child; I am big enough to take care of myself."

"Oh, yes, here is a proud man; I should like to know how, in my place, you would have got through this night? But it's no use troubling about that. I hoped, monsieur, that you were going to tell me what you have been doing since yesterday."

"Yes, my friend, you shall know everything, and you will see that I have done nothing wrong."

"I very much doubt it, but never mind, speak!"

"You must know that after riding about the country for a long time, I found myself surprised by night at a great distance from the castle. As I was uncertain of the road I must take to get back, I questioned a peasant who told me I was not more than two leagues from Offenburg. I was, then, nearly six leagues distant from the castle. I was likely to miss my way in returning and I thought it was wiser to go and pass the night in the town. I asked the way of the peasant, he told me and I started; but I had not gone a quarter of a league when I saw a house of humble but respectable appearance. I approached it — and what a surprise — the most melodious sounds came to my ear; a divine music made itself heard, and I remained for an hour motionless before that dwelling, listening to a voice which went right to my heart."

"Oh, the devil!"

"Finally, urged by curiosity, or rather by a

secret feeling which mastered me, I resolved to know the person who had given rise to such delightful sensations in my heart. I knocked, a good old woman opened the door to me. I asked to speak to the mistress of the house, and was introduced into a little drawing-room, where a lady of middle age was occupied in reading; and near her — O my friend, how can I depict to you the most perfect thing in the universe, the most beautiful being formed by nature, an angel, in fact."

"And this angel had made the music?"

"Yes, my friend, that was the person whom I had heard. At my approach she became silent. The old lady rose and asked me what had procured her the honor of seeing me. I told her how I had missed my way without perceiving it. At the name of the Count von Framberg, a benevolent smile animated her face."

"Hang it, I can well believe it."

"She offered me the shelter of her roof until the morning. I expressed a fear of discommoding her."

"However, you remained?"

"I seated myself with these ladies and engaged them in conversation. The young girl seemed timid and reserved, but the old lady was a little gossipy, informing me that they had lived in the house where I found them for a dozen years, alone; that they saw nobody, because Pauline's

father did not like society; that he had then been absent for some time, on business of importance; and that they were impatiently awaiting his return, when they should learn if the end of his journey had been accomplished."

"It seems to me that there is a good deal of mystery here."

"Well, my friend, the night passed while we were chatting thus. As soon as I saw the day begin to break I rose and made my excuses for keeping them up so late."

"And then?"

"I asked permission to again trouble their solitude. The good lady at first made some difficulty —"

"It was necessary to tell her you were my pupil?"

"But at last she consented to receive me sometimes, in order that she might enliven a little the solitude of her dear Pauline, and because she thought the son of Colonel Framberg worthy of such preference. I was at the height of my joy. The young person did not appear to be vexed at the determination of her guardian, and I departed, bearing with me the hope of soon seeing again the one who will henceforth occupy all my thoughts."

"That's very well indeed, monsieur; so at the age of sixteen you are already in love."

"Yes, and for life, Mullern."

"You've profited prettily by the lessons of

wisdom which I have given you. Come, believe me, think no more of this new passion which will lead you to nothing good, but rather make you commit some foolishness, if I do not look out."

"You can't think, Mullern, that I shall ever forget this adorable woman, this woman for whom I would already give my life; have you never loved yourself?"

"Excuse me, monsieur, I have loved glory, wine, and women; as to the latter, however, only moderately; and I have always carefully avoided those grand passions which draw one from one's duties, which make one live like a Don Quixote, and which give one the appearance of an idiot. Believe me, it is only thus that one can be happy, and not in filling the head with dreams which always fail of realization."

"Despite the moral beauty of your discourse, which I esteem very highly, you can't prevent me, my dear Mullern, from believing that true love is the only happiness on earth. What matter if it be a chimera, so long as it renders us happy?"

"Come, I see very well that I shall lose my time in moralizing with you, and I give it up. But at least I could wish that the object of your transport be worthy of it, and that you should not give yourself up to an adventuress, like an apprentice in love."

"Take care, Mullern, you outrage her whom I adore."

"But do you, at least, know her father's name?"

"Certainly, his name is Christiern."

"Christiern! I've never heard that name on the battlefield."

"Nevertheless, he is a military man."

"A military man, that's very fortunate."

"Thus you see that these are ladies who —"

"I see that we are now at the castle and that it is time to go to bed. Truly, monsieur, you lead me a pretty life, a sergeant-major of cavalry to go to bed when everybody is getting up."

"But what prevents you from resting without going to bed."

"Because I am all used up with galloping all night."

"And perhaps with rolling around so much in the hay," added Henri, laughing.

Here Mullern bit his lips and went into his room, fearing lest it was now his pupil's turn to give him some lessons.

CHAPTER V

The Colonel's Reception

For nearly six months after Henri's adventure he repaired every day to the dwelling of his inamorata, notwithstanding Mullern's repeated remonstrances, and the fatigue which these reiterated journeys occasioned him. In enterprises of this nature, however, fatigue counts as nothing, and the remonstrances of parents and friends might as well be uttered to the wind for all the effect they have on the young and ardent lover.

One day, however, on finding Henri still in the castle, Mullern said to him, —

"What! have you not gone yet?"

"No, Mullern," answered Henri, "and I'm not going."

"So your Dulcinea has already played the usual tricks with you, has she?"

"My Pauline is incapable of changing," asserted the young man.

"Has she then told you that she loves you?"

"Do you think that during the six months I have been visiting her our hearts have not understood each other, and our eyes expressed our love?"

"Oh, I see very well that the young lady knows all about it."

"I did not go there this morning because good Madame Reinstard, who stands in the place of a mother to Pauline, has warned me that the latter's father is expected to arrive, from one moment to another, and that he would take offence at my visits unless he were informed as to the beginning of our acquaintance."

"So you will be separated from your lost sweetheart for a long time?"

"For a long time; oh, I hope that some day I shall be able to present myself to her father. He may see me, he may like me."

"And if he is reasonable he will close the door of his house to you."

"You dishearten me, Mullern."

"You see I am not in love, I merely say what I think."

At the end of a fortnight, Henri, no longer able to restrain his impatience, resolved to visit his sweetheart's home, but this time Mullern wished to accompany his pupil, for he greatly desired to see the young lady's father and also to know the young lady herself. Henri would have preferred to go alone, but Mullern declared that it was more in accordance with the usages of society that he should accompany him, and that if Pauline's father was an honest soldier the appearance of an old sergeant-major of cavalry would inspire him with

more confidence than that of a heedless young man. They therefore started together. Henri, urged by his desire to see his sweetheart, put his horse to his topmost speed. Mullern shouted loudly to him that he could not follow him, which was one reason the more that our young man should not stop. Finally, they reached the house, and Henri immediately dismounted. Mullern examined the dwelling, which was of very modest appearance, and discontentedly shook his head. Henri knocked; after some moments an old woman came to open the door, but Henri saw it was not the servant whom he was accustomed to see, and asked, trembling, —

"Is M. Christiern here?"

"He doesn't live here now, he went away about a week ago," she said.

"Good God! and his daughter? and Madame Reinstard?"

"He took his daughter with him, and Madame Reinstard accompanied them."

Henri remained as if struck by lightning. Mullern shouted with laughter.

"Ha, ha! Thousand bombs! I am very much pleased that you should thus be disembarrassed of your beautiful unknown."

"Not so, though she be at the end of the world I will yet find her!" cried Henri, and he began to question the good woman as to the departure of M. Christiern. But he could learn nothing fur-

ther than that the three people who had lived in the house had left without making known the purpose or destination of their journey, and that the person who now dwelt there knew nothing of her predecessors. While saying these words the old woman shut the door and left our travellers on the highway. Henri, in despair, wished to go to Offenburg to scour the neighborhood, and to strain every nerve to find his sweetheart. But Mullern would not hear reason, and obliged him to return with him to the castle. They remained there for some days, Henri thinking of nothing but travel and elopements, and Mullern felicitating himself that the intrigue was thus broken off, when they were apprised that Colonel Framberg would very shortly return to the castle. Mullern was overjoyed; he was about to see his colonel, his benefactor, again. He turned everything upside down that the count might be received in his domain with all the honors which were his due.

All his vassals were put under arms. Mullern exercised them from morning until night, ordering combats and evolutions. M. Betteman himself, who for some time past had had nothing better to do than to get tipsy, was forced to carry a musket, to take part in the exercises, and twice each day to mount guard on the ramparts of the castle, which highly displeased him, but Mullern thought that it was the best way to reform him.

Henri momentarily forgot the girl who had turned his head, and the arrival of his father, whom he had not seen for so long, occupied all his mind. He shared Mullern's activity, and awaited impatiently the time when he should embrace his sire. The much-desired moment arrived at last. M. Betteman, who was acting as sentinel on that day, perceived from afar the colonel's carriage; following Mullern's orders he fired his gun to announce the arrival, and the shock of the fire-arm threw him to the ground. Everyone was soon in motion in the castle. Mullern ran to pick up the sentinel, and to have the drawbridge lowered. All the peasants were ranged in two lines, and Mullern bade them fire all together as soon as the carriage entered the castle gates. M. Bettemann ran to the cellar, that he might not hear this frightful noise, but Mullern, who lost sight of nothing, ran after him and forced him to reënter the ranks, giving him a gun which he assured him kicked less than the other.

Finally the sound of the horses' feet was heard, the carriage passed over the drawbridge, and Mullern gave the signal. M. Bettemann, scared or electrified by this sudden discharge, tried to do the same as the others. But his gun, which had not been used for a long time, burst to fragments in his face, and he rolled howling under the horses' feet. The latter, frightened by the cries of the tutor, galloped right and left in the

court, making the vassals fly before them. Mullern shouted at the top of his voice to rally his troops. Henri ran after the horses which, still further excited by the uproar, galloped faster, and only stopped when they came to a pond in which they overturned the carriage, crushing half a dozen ducks as they fell. Finally, the horses being stopped, Henri ran to raise his father, who had rolled into the pond, but who happily got out of it at the expense only of his grand uniform, which was covered with mud, and having behind him a goose who had sought refuge near him and had attached itself to the back of his trousers. While they were occupied in detaching the goose, which would not leave hold, Mullern came forward with an air of consternation.

"Oh, my dear Colonel, will you deign to excuse me for making such a failure of your reception?"

"It is nothing, my dear Mullern; your intention was good, and that is enough."

"It was all that Bettemann's fault."

"I shall get out of it by changing my clothes."

"And he with the loss of an eye, my Colonel."

"But where is my son? My Henri, come and embrace me."

The young man threw himself into the colonel's arms; the latter looked at him tenderly and exclaimed, "It is she; it is my Clémentine!" and pressed him tenderly to his heart. Henri for his

part felt in his heart the birth of that profound sentiment of respect and recognition which he could not fail to feel towards one whom he regarded as his father. After some moments given to emotion, the colonel thought that he would do well to go and change his dress. He desired Henri to see that everything was restored to order in the castle, and signed to Mullern to follow him to his apartments.

"Well, my dear Mullern," said the colonel when they were alone, "I confided my dear Henri to your care nearly twelve years ago. Since then I have been running about the world fighting the enemy that I might lose the heartbreaking remembrance of the loss of a woman who well deserved my tears and my regrets. And how have you whom I charged specially to form my son's heart passed the time. You have not yet rendered me an account of your troubles and cares, and the manner in which you have endeavored to make of Henri a man for whom I shall not have to blush. Tell me, have you been successful?"

"Yes, Colonel, and proudly successful, I flatter myself. Come, the young man is a jolly fellow who can hold his own."

"How do you mean?"

"That's to say, Colonel, that he will make people talk about him. First he is brave, I will answer for that, and he knows how to handle his

sword. I hope you will see him do so one day, yourself; and that you will compliment me upon him."

"And what more?"

"Well, he is humane, generous, sensitive. Oh, come now, for sensitive—"

"I see that he has all his mother's virtues."

"Yes, Colonel, only I fear that this sensitiveness will draw him too far."

"What do you mean to say?"

"That the young man has a devil of a taste for the other sex."

"Do you think so?"

"Hang it! Do I think so?" Here Mullern stopped, remembering that he had promised Henri to hide his adventure with his sweetheart from the colonel.

"Then, Mullern, you are entirely satisfied with my son."

"Yes, Colonel, very much satisfied. My pupil will do me honor some day, I am sure. Of course, he has also some little faults; first, he is violent, impatient, headstrong."

"Oh, indeed! You never told me that."

"But don't be uneasy, Colonel. His faults will correct themselves as he grows older. When the heart is good, there is always a remedy, and his is good. Oh, I will answer for it, Colonel, as I would for yours. He is worthy to be your son."

"What do you say, Mullern?" cried the colonel, impetuously.

Mullern was disturbed, and rubbed his ear, when he perceived that he had made a slip of the tongue. However, he took courage, and responded, —

"My faith, Colonel! Since the word slipped out, I will not retract it; besides, I cannot dissimulate, and I confess that it bothered me to have something to hide from you, Colonel."

"Well then, Mullern, since you know the secret of Henri's birth, there is no need of further pretence on my part; besides future events will perhaps force me to one day tell him all, and if I should die before revealing this secret to him, I shall not be sorry that some one else knows it. But reflect well, Mullern, that you must never divulge to anyone what I am going to tell you — unless forced to do so by the most imperative circumstances — without my orders."

"Don't be uneasy, Colonel. I have given you my word. You know me, and you know that Mullern is incapable of breaking his oath."

Colonel Framberg then told Mullern all that concerned Henri's birth, as well as the name of his real father, which Clémentine had told him.

Several months passed — Colonel Framberg loved Henri as his son, but he perceived that Mullern's pupil was by no means as perfect as the latter had described him, although Henri's

conduct had been much better since the colonel's return to the castle.

One day Count von Framberg made Henri come to his room and spoke to him in these terms,—

"My dear son, you are beginning to be of an age where a sojourn in an old castle with your father for your only society is not sufficient for you; you are only seventeen years old, but you have the look of a man, and I believe that I can allow you, without fear, to take care of yourself for a time."

"What do you mean, father, by that?"

"My dear boy, I wish to say that you must travel, you must learn to know the world. I went into the army myself at the age of fifteen, so you see I was still younger than you are."

"Are you going to send me into the army then, father?"

"As you do not appear to have any very decided taste for military life, despite the education that Mullern has given you, we will wait till you have a desire for it; but I don't wish you to pass your youth in this castle. You must travel, run about the world; that will fit you for anything you may wish to do."

"And you, father?"

"Why, my dear boy, I'm beginning to be of that age which prefers repose to pleasure; I shall therefore remain at the castle and tranquilly await

your return, well persuaded that your conduct when far from me will never oblige me to go in search of you."

"Dear father, be sure that I shall never forget your lessons."

"In that case we may consider the thing as settled. You shall start in a week; I should have liked very well for Mullern to travel with you, but that good hussar, from whom I have been separated so long, will be the only person who can share my solitude during your absence. Besides, rest is becoming necessary to him also, and he will remain with me. You can take Franck, the gardener's son, as your servant. He appears to be intelligent, and I think that you will be pleased with him."

Henri, delighted at his father's determination, prepared everything for his journey. The memory of his dear Pauline had never been effaced from his mind, and he hoped in the course of his travel to find out what had become of her. The day of his departure arrived, and Henri left the Castle von Framberg accompanied by Franck and well provided with money and all that was necessary to him. The colonel wept as he parted from Henri, and Mullern himself felt some tears roll down his cheeks as he parted with him whose youth he had formed, and for whom he would have given his life.

Eighteen months passed and Henri regularly

sent news of himself, but at the end of that time the letters ceased. The colonel and Mullern, both of whom were alarmed at his silence, did not know what to conclude. At length, the colonel decided to obtain information as to the conduct of his son and learned that he was not so exemplary as he had led them to believe; and that the young man had given himself up to all his passions. At first Mullern took his pupil's part and sought to excuse him to the colonel, repeating that it was necessary to pass his youth and that he, being young, had done better than others. The colonel always ended by being appeased, but soon more important news came and put an end to Mullern's excuses. Some one informed the colonel that his son was at Strasburg with a young person whom he was on the point of marrying. The colonel thought that it was his duty to prevent the foolishness which Henri was about to commit, and decided to start for Strasburg with Mullern.

"The deuce is in him with the women, the foolish young man," cried Mullern, while travelling with the colonel. "I always told him that they would play him some bad tricks; but, zounds! I could sooner have softened a bullet than have made him listen to reason." At last they arrived at Strasburg, where they learned that Henri had left shortly before for Paris. The colonel, without stopping, started for the capital

with Mullern, and on arriving at Paris they were informed that Henri had departed the evening before to return to Strasburg.

"Let us also return?" said the colonel.

"Ah, thousand citadels, my Colonel! I believe that the young man is mocking us."

We have seen how, in a cross road which the postilion had taken in order to arrive more quickly, he had overturned Mullern and his colonel in a ditch, but we do not yet know how Mullern got out of the cellar where we left him, and it is time to go to his help.

"Lord have mercy upon me! Help!" cried the person upon whose nose Mullern had fallen.

"Where are you? Speak!" said the latter, putting his sabre on the man's breast.

"O good God! It's the chief of robbers."

"Why don't you answer, jack pudding, instead of howling? Who are you? and what are you doing there?"

"I'm the porter of this house, and in my master's absence I came down into the cellar, where I went to sleep as — "

"As you were drinking the wine which it held! Oh, I begin to understand, and I would very willingly keep you company in that occupation, but my colonel is upstairs awaiting the result of my researches. I don't wish to leave him lingering there any longer. Come and see if you can't give him a light, and after that, if you wish, we will

come down here, and I will help you to empty several bottles with pleasure."

So saying, Mullern pushed his host towards the stairs. The latter, after picking up his candle, tremblingly followed Mullern, not knowing yet what to think of his adventure.

On reaching an upper room Carll, for that was the name of the porter, lit his candle, without daring to raise his eyes to look at the person who was with him.

"Come, walk before me," said Mullern to him, "that we may find my colonel." After passing through several rooms they came at last to the one in which were the colonel and the postilion, both very uneasy at Mullern's absence.

"My Colonel," said the latter, "here is the only living being in this house, whom I discovered in the cellar."

"Honest man," said the colonel to Carll, "I hope you will excuse the manner in which we have introduced ourselves into this house.

Carll, whom fear had sobered, listened attentively to the colonel.

"You are not robbers, then?" cried he, when the latter had finished speaking.

"Who are you calling robbers?" said Mullern.

"No, my friend," answered the colonel, "we are travellers. I was repairing to Strasburg with this honest soldier when our chaise was overturned

in the ditch, my leg was hurt, and perceiving no other shelter in which to pass the night, we tried to get into this house in the hope that we should there find some one who would help us."

"Oh, if you are travellers, I am at your service, monsieur; my master is away for a few days, and while waiting for him to come back, I will take you to a chamber where you will find a good bed."

"As soon as possible," said Mullern, slapping Carll's shoulder. "This will put me on good terms with you; I see that you are a good fellow, and that we can arrange matters together."

"But," said the colonel to Carll, "you tell me that your master is absent, if he should return are you not afraid that he will scold you for your generous hospitality?"

"No, monsieur," answered Carll, "my master is a singular man, sometimes gloomy and silent, and sometimes very gay and chatty; but for the rest I have always found him humane towards everybody, and I do not doubt that he will approve my conduct in regard to you."

"Why, hang it, even if he's a bear we shall be able to tame him," said Mullern.

The colonel, who greatly needed rest, begged the porter to lead him to the room which he had destined for him, and Carll hastened to obey him. Mullern and the postilion carried the colonel on their arms, for his wound had grown so much

worse that he could no longer stand. The room to which they were led was very agreeably situated, having a view of the garden at the back of the house. The colonel got them to help him to bed and advised Mullern to go to rest also, assuring him that he would call him if he had need of anything.

"Well, my honest fellow," said Mullern to Carll, as they went down from the colonel's room, "although we are devilishly tired, I and this big simpleton here," pointing to the postilion, "who says nothing but who thinks all the more, I believe before going to bed it will do us no harm to have a little supper, for we have had nothing for nearly twelve hours, and I cannot sleep when my stomach is empty."

"Well said," added the postilion, "I am entirely of your opinion."

"In that case I will try to give you some supper, but you will have to eat what there is here."

"Oh, we are not fastidious; in war as in peace, I eat what is given me, but I believe I noticed that the cellar was well furnished."

Carll laughed and they immediately occupied themselves in preparations for their supper.

Everything was soon ready, and they seated themselves at the table. Mullern complimented Carll on his wine, the postilion said not a word, believing he could use his teeth to a better purpose. And the porter, who had a great weakness

into the room. The latter approached the colonel's bed, saying that, while he was grieved at the accident which had happened, he congratulated himself that it was in his house they had found succor. While the colonel answered these obliging speeches, Mullern retired to one side and amused himself by examining the features of this new person.

M. de Monterranville was a man of about fifty years, tall, thin, with an olive complexion, and with eyes which were lively and piercing when he looked anyone in the face, but which he ordinarily cast down. His face was rather handsome, and his bearing distinguished. "I don't like this man," said Mullern to himself, after attentively watching M. de Monterranville; "unless I deceive myself, he is not frank in his speech."

As to the colonel he was profuse in his thanks to the owner of the house, and felicitated himself on having fallen into such good hands. The latter left them, begging the colonel to do as though he were in his own house. When he had left, Mullern imparted to the colonel his thoughts regarding their host, but the colonel treated them as visionary, and did not share his opinion.

The room where Mullern slept was exactly opposite that of the master of the house, only as it was a story higher he could distinguish beneath the half curtains which were at the window what was passing in the apartment of the latter. On

entering his room to go to bed Mullern resumed his conjectures on the person with whom they were staying. While reflecting, the hours passed, and he saw by his watch that it was near midnight. He rose to extinguish his candle, and while passing the window perceived a light in M. de Monterranville's room. Curiosity and the desire to see if he could not discover something that would justify his ideas urged him to glance for a moment into his neighbor's room. He extinguished his candle, that it might be thought he had gone to bed, and softly posted himself in the embrasure of his window. He remained for a long time in that position, but saw nothing; tired of uselessly waiting, he was about to go to bed, when he perceived M. de Monterranville striding about his room like a man absorbed in reflection. Then he saw him open his desk, and take therefrom several bags of silver; he examined them, and counted some of them, and then left it all to fall into a revery. Wearied by seeing nothing further Mullern went to bed, ill pleased that he could not understand what all this meant. The next day Mullern watched again, and saw the same conduct on the part of M. de Monterranville, although he did not touch his desk, but he continued to walk slowly up and down, stopping sometimes to wipe his forehead, or throw himself down in an attitude of the deepest despair. Mullern ended by consigning to the devil his host

and his mysterious promenades, and went to bed thinking that M. de Monterranville was a somnambulist or that he had a fit of madness.

However, time passed, and the colonel's wound healed but slowly. Wearied of getting no news of Henri, and seeing that it would be long before he would be able to follow on his traces, he resolved to send Mullern on before to learn what was transpiring, and he made him come into his room that he might impart his plans to him.

"Mullern," said he, when they were alone, "I can no longer restrain my impatience, it is absolutely necessary that I should know what Henri is doing now."

"Thousand bombs, my Colonel! Don't you suppose that I desire to know as much as you do, and don't I fret at seeing you nailed to your bed like an old cannon of forty-eight; but what can we do, Colonel? we must take courage.

"Listen, Mullern, if you are willing, I shall await my cure with more patience."

"If that depends on me, Colonel, you know that you have only to speak."

"Very well, my dear Mullern, you shall go to Strasburg and seek for traces of Henri."

"What, Colonel, you wish that I shall leave you alone in this old demolished citadel?"

"Why not?"

"Having no one for company but a man who resembles an ourang-outang."

"Be easy, Colonel, I am more than a match for them, above all, where women are concerned."

PHOTOGRAVURE FROM ORIGINAL DRAWING BY CHARLES H. WHITE.

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CHAPTER VI

A Hayloft Again

Mullern arrived at Strasburg towards nine o'clock in the evening, and entered the White Horse, the first inn he came to on his way.

"Get supper for me immediately, and also feed my horse at once, if you please," said the hussar, going into one of the public rooms of the inn where several travellers were gathered around a table.

"Monsieur shall be served immediately," answered, in a thin, piping voice, a fat, bouncing woman, who seemed to unite in her own person all the different functionaries of an inn.

Mullern approached the hearth, to await as best he could the supper of which he felt in great need, for his ride had sharpened his appetite, and was warming his hands at the cheerful fire when suddenly the travellers and the people of the inn burst into a great shout of laughter as they looked at the new arrival. The latter, who was anything but a patient man, and who was little inclined to allow anyone to laugh at him without informing himself as to their reason for doing so, began to frown and to twist his mustaches and, assuming a stern

expression, said: "May I ask the cause of your merriment, gentlemen?"

"Hang it, you might know well enough we are laughing at you!" answered a man with mustaches, who had a big rusty sword at his side, and looked like a recruiting sergeant or one of those men who seek to dine gratis or to pay for their dinners with fisticuffs.

"Oh, you are laughing at me," said Mullern, measuring him from head to feet, "and pray what do you find laughable in my physiognomy?"

"Look at your breeches behind, and you'll see that we're not laughing at your face."

Mullern immediately examined the garment in question, and found that the friction of the saddle had so seriously impaired them as to disclose a portion of his underclothing.

"Well, what is that to laugh at?" said Mullern to the recruiting sergeant, "anyone would imagine you'd never seen a pair of torn breeches in your life by the way you are laughing at mine."

Jeanneton hastened to interpose between the gentlemen, who were getting heated, by informing Mullern that his meal was ready and leading him to his table, while she whispered in his ear that she would repair his breeches for him. Mullern nodded in response, and ate his morsel of sirloin hungrily, resolving to prove to Jeanneton that he was worthy of her good opinion.

The recruiting sergeant, while eating his cutlet

sergeant's damsel, "I did not give you credit for such a whimsical taste. Don't disturb yourself, my boy. I didn't come to take your fair friend from you."

The sergeant was furious when he saw the form and features of the poor old woman whom he had mistaken for the buxom Jeanneton; Mullern burst into shouts of laughter, which still further augmented his rage.

"Deuce take it!" shouted he; "must this jack pudding always come to stick his nose in my business?"

Mullern, who had greatly desired to punish the sergeant for making fun of his torn breeches, at the name jack pudding applied his foot so dexterously that the sergeant sprawled on the floor. The latter rose and leaped on Mullern, seizing a pitchfork which he found near him; Mullern set down his candle to await his adversary with firm foot, and these gentleman pitched into each other to decide which was the better man. But, unforeseen misfortune, while they were engaged in fisticuffs they did not notice that the candle had set fire to a bundle of hay, and in a moment the loft was all ablaze. The old woman, half suffocated with smoke, made the house echo with her shrieks; everybody got up and ran hither and thither, without knowing why. But soon the flames which issued in volumes from the top of the house warned the spectators of the danger which threat-

ened them. In vain the innkeeper endeavored to save his house; the fire had attained such progress that it was impossible to extinguish it. In the tumult Mullern abandoned his adversary to take to flight; he ran downstairs to his room, but finding it already afire was about to leave it when he heard feeble cries issuing from the depths of it, and returning found poor Jeanneton, who, while awaiting him, had got into bed. Our hussar, who saw Jeanneton about to die for his sake, went through the flames and took her, half dead, and clad only in her chemise, in his arms, and left the inn running with his precious burden.

"Where are we, my friend," said Jeanneton to her liberator, as she came to herself.

"Faith, I don't know where we are," answered Mullern, placing her on a stone bench. "All that I know is that I'm in my torn breeches, and you in your chemise; and as soon as it is daylight we shall see half the inhabitants of Strasburg in contemplation before us."

"I have no desire to wait for them," said Jeanneton. "But has the fire entirely destroyed the inn?"

"I should think so, indeed! At the rate it's going it'll burn the whole town, if they don't take care."

"What can we do? we can't stay here almost naked."

"No, that'll be too risky."

"Ah, an idea has come to me. I've an aunt who is a clear-starcher in this neighborhood, we must go and find her; she's a good soul and will give us a kind welcome."

"So be it, we'll go to your aunt's house."

Behold Mullern and Jeanneton, arm in arm, clad in the scantiest of raiment, proceeding in search of the laundress's house.

After walking for some time they reached a narrow, dirty lane and stopped before an alley-way, for it was here that Jeanneton's aunt dwelt. Mullern gave four raps, which the good woman, who lived on the fourth story, did not hear.

"It's because she's a little hard of hearing and she sleeps like a top," said Jeanneton.

"In that case," said Mullern, "it's a chance but we shall have to get in by the window."

He knocked a second time, then a third; still no answer. Mullern, rendered impatient, was about to throw stones at the windows, when a neighbor on the first floor, awakened by the noise, half opened his window and asked who was knocking in that fashion in the middle of the night.

"It's me, Monsieur Grattelard," answered Jeanneton, "I've come to sleep at my aunt's house, would you open the door for me, if you please?"

"Oh, it's you, Madame Jeanneton, and at this hour?"

"Yes, Monsieur Grattelard, because there's a

fire at the inn where I lived, M. Boutmann's, and I was obliged to escape as best I could."

"My God! is it possible? What are you telling me?"

"What are you doing at the window, Bibi?" said a little squeaky voice, which came from the depths of the alcove in the neighbor's room. It was Madame Grattelard, who, missing her husband from beside her, was rising, very anxious to see what he was doing.

"It's nothing, my little pussy; it's only Mademoiselle Jeanneton, who has come to sleep at her aunt's, and I'm going to open the door for her. But get into bed, my ducky; you'll catch cold."

So saying M. Grattelard closed the window and came downstairs to open the door for Mademoiselle Jeanneton.

"Who is this original?" asked Mullern of the latter.

"It's an old retired pork butcher, who lives on his income, with his chaste better half."

"Thousand bombs!" exclaimed the hussar, "the old fellow seems very much afraid of breaking his neck, for he doesn't hurry himself in coming down."

At last M. Grattelard appeared in his night-shirt and nightcap, with a candle in his hand. On seeing Jeanneton in her chemise he drew up his nightcap and rearranged his night-shirt; but when

he saw Mullern he remained motionless before them, not knowing what to say. In two words Jeanneton told him the whole story, and when he had learned that Mullern was her deliverer, he was no longer astonished that she offered him a shelter.

The three of them went upstairs together and on the landing of the first story met Madame Grattelard, who had desired to assure herself as to the identity of the person for whom her husband had opened the door.

"O heavens! a naked man," said she, perceiving Mullern.

"Go back to bed now, little simpleton," said M. Grattelard. "I'll tell you all about it." But Madame Grattelard, who had also seen the young woman in her chemise, and who feared that her husband might make comparisons between her charms and those of the more youthful Jeanneton, led him towards their own apartments, saying to him that since he had opened the door for them, the visitors had no further need of his services. Jeanneton thanked M. Grattelard, and the married couple returned to their quarters.

Arrived at the laundress' door, Jeanneton and Mullern knocked as though they wanted to break it in; but the good woman awakened and came tremblingly to ask who was there.

"It's me, aunt," answered Jeanneton, "open the door quick."

The old woman was greatly surprised on seeing Jeanneton in her chemise, and a man with her equally destitute of clothing.

But Jeanneton soon informed her of all that had happened, and Madame Tapin, for that was the aunt's name, fell on Mullern's neck and kissed him thrice for having saved her niece. Mullern could have dispensed with these caresses, but it was necessary to submit to them.

Jeanneton and Mullern had great need of rest. Madame Tapin's lodgings consisted only of a large room where she slept and a smaller one at the side where she made a bed for her niece. Mullern declared that he asked nothing better than a chair in which to pass the remainder of the night; as he said this he glanced at Jeanneton, who perfectly understood him, while Madame Tapin consented to all they asked.

The room was soon ready. Jeanneton went to bed, Madame Tapin did likewise, and was soon as fast asleep as before. Mullern then rejoined the one for whom he had set fire to a house, fought a man, awakened the neighbors, etc.

The next day when each one had risen, Mullern thought that a good breakfast was necessary after the fatigues of the preceding night, but Jeanneton had not a sou; Madame Tapin was poor and could offer them scarcely anything but bread and milk. Mullern remembered that he ought to have in his breeches a well-filled purse,

for Colonel Framberg wished him to spare neither trouble nor expense while looking for his son Henri. Joy sprang up again in all their hearts. Jeanneton went to get what was necessary for breakfast and to find a tailor to bring some clothes for Mullern; and Madame Tapin bustled about, preparing the meal. Meanwhile Mullern reflected as to what he should do. He thought he would be just as well off at Madame Tapin's as at the inn, that his lodging there would in no wise interfere with his researches, and the result of his reflections was that he dwelt with Jeanneton the whole of the time that he remained at Strasburg.

They breakfasted gayly; Jeanneton felt nothing but joy at having found in Mullern a man at once so rich and so amorous. By the way, she was a well-meaning girl, this Jeanneton, her only fault being too great a liking for the masculine sex.

Mullern told them in two words what had brought him to Strasburg, and promised to remain with them while he sojourned there. Madame Tapin was delighted; she saw that Mullern loved good wine, and the best of fare, and thought that while he should be in the house she could make what she called "wedding feasts."

After breakfast Mullern went out to begin his search. He traversed almost the whole town without obtaining any information in regard to Henri, and returned in the evening to his Jean-

neton to forget the fatigues of the day. Thus the days passed, and every one was satisfied, only Madame Tapin could not understand how a man like Mullern, who was so fond of good living, could be contented to pass the nights in a chair.

At the end of twelve days or so, Mullern began to believe that the object of his search was not in Strasburg; for though he had scoured the whole town, and visited all the public places, he had not met Henri. He had decided to write to his colonel, to inform him of the nonsuccess of his march, and to ask him what he should do, when one evening, on going into a café, Mullern recognized Franck, Henri's servant, engaged in drinking beer at a table. Mullern refrained from speaking to him, believing that if Franck saw him he would tell him some lie to put him off the scent; he therefore immediately left the café, and patiently waited at the door until Franck should leave, that he might follow him without being seen.

He had not long to wait, in a few moments Franck came out of the café; Mullern followed him in such a manner as to be unobserved by the young man without losing sight of him. Franck threaded several crooked streets, and to Mullern's astonishment soon left the town. But he had not gone far when he stopped before a pretty villa somewhat apart from the other dwellings. He knocked at the door, some one opened, and he went in. Mullern advanced, and exam-

ined the house, so far as the darkness would permit him, and thinking it too late to enter and demand explanations he retired, deciding to return early the next morning.

But having followed Mullern, let us return to our hero, whom we have left for so long a time.

CHAPTER VII

Florence

Upon leaving the Castle von Framberg, Henri and Franck immediately proceeded towards Offenburg. Young Framberg had but one thought in his mind and that was as to how he might best succeed in finding his dear Pauline, and it occurred to him that as she had lived near Offenburg when he had known her, he might perhaps be so fortunate as to learn in that city something as to her whereabouts and her circumstances.

Henri, who was of a confiding nature, and extremely desirous of talking about his sweetheart, as was quite natural under the circumstances, had soon taken Franck into his confidence, and told him of his desire to find the girl who had vanished so suddenly from his sight; and of course it was necessary that Franck should know all about it in order that he might better aid him in his researches.

Franck was an intelligent fellow, shrewd and clever, and better adapted to conduct an intrigue than to weed in the park at Framberg. Flattered by the confidence of his master, he promised to render himself worthy of it, and to do all he could

to help him find the girl he adored. Arrived at Offenburg, Henri and Franck made every possible inquiry in regard to the man Christiern and his daughter, but without the slightest success. Wearied at last of a search which resulted in nothing, Henri resolved to travel in some distant countries in order to distract himself, and to leave to chance the finding of his dear Pauline.

Henri thought that Italy, the beauty of which he had heard greatly extolled, would afford him more distractions than any other country. He therefore started on the way to Naples, travelling on horseback, and stopping in all the places which were worthy his attention. Nothing extraordinary happened until they came to Florence, where Henri desired to pass some time.

The charming situation of this city, on the borders of the Arno, the beauty of its edifices, the masterpieces of all kinds which it possessed, intoxicated Henri's senses. Never having left the Castle von Framberg, except to visit in the neighborhood, he had not imagined that there existed in the whole world a place so delightful.

One evening while walking on the outskirts of the city, Henri heard the sounds of melodious music coming from a fine house situated on the water's edge.

"O my darling! It is she, she is there," said Henri to Franck. "It is the same music which I heard near Offenburg."

"Do you think so, monsieur?"

"Who beside my Pauline could draw from the lute such enchanting sounds?"

"O monsieur, a great many women play that instrument."

"No matter, I must absolutely know the person who lives in that house."

When Henri had formed any plan, he could not rest until he had put it into execution. Thus he began by singing under the windows of the house, in order to attract attention. Our hero was not a musician, but he had a fine voice, and the desire to please sufficed him in default of skill. Very soon the music ceased; the player was evidently listening to the new singer.

"You see very well that it must be she," said Henri; "she recognizes my voice, and she has ceased playing in order to listen to me."

"You can't be sure of that, monsieur; you don't know but what that's the manner of making love in Italy, and perhaps there is nothing unusual in her listening to you."

Despite Franck's opinion, Henri continued to sing, and the unseen person to listen. When he had finished, the Venetian blind opened, and some one threw into the air a note attached to a pebble.

"It is a letter," cried Henri, picking up the paper, "didn't I tell you it was she?"

"You can't be sure of that, monsieur," answered Franck, shaking his head.

Henri approached the window, and by means of some rays of light which escaped from it he read the following, —

Amiable stranger, the sound of your sweet and tender voice has penetrated right to my heart. I cannot resist the desire to know you, and I yield to the charm of your accents. Be at the little garden gate which is on the water side, at midnight this evening, and some one will lead you to me.

Henri knew not what to think after reading this note.

"Didn't I tell you, monsieur, that you were letting yourself in for a love affair?" remarked Franck.

"You are a fool," answered Henri, "this lady no doubt knows me, and she has something to say to me."

"Oh, you understand now that the one who writes is not your sweet young lady."

"But it's true that — However, I shall see the one who has written to me, and I intend to know what all this means."

"What, monsieur! You will go to this rendezvous?"

"And pray why should I not go?"

"But, monsieur, perhaps someone is laying a snare for you; believe me, my dear master, you had better not go."

"Come, say no more."

Franck was silent, seeing that it would be vain to endeavor to turn Henri from his project, and

the latter went to prepare for his midnight rendezvous.

At the appointed hour he was alone at the little garden gate; he had waited for some moments when it opened, and a woman took him by the hand and begged him to allow her to lead him. As he followed his conductress, his heart beat loudly, the effect ordinarily produced by a first love adventure; but this unknown uneasiness is of very short duration, for when pleasure becomes habitual one's enjoyment of it is diminished. Henri's conductress, after leading him through several of the garden paths, took him into the house; they went up a little private staircase, she opened a door, bade Henri enter, and retired.

Our hero remained for some moments motionless with astonishment and admiration. What he saw was indeed well calculated to surprise him. He was in a charming boudoir decorated with all that luxury and good taste could imagine to render it delightful, and it was lighted by an infinite number of lustres, the dazzling light of which added enchantment to this delightful spot; but what seductive object attracted Henri's looks? It was a young and beautiful woman, possessing all the gifts of fortune and of nature, who was carelessly lying on a sofa, and who welcomed the young man with a charming smile.

"Well, monsieur, have you nothing to say to me?"

But Felicia saw well that Henri, a novice in love and romantic in character, could not be attracted by ordinary means. That was why she tried to draw his attention by means of her lute, which she played very well. We have seen how successful she had been in inflaming the imagination of our young traveller, and we shall see what she did later in the adventure.

The next morning Henri reflected on his situation; he vowed that he would know better this Felicia who had captivated his senses, and reproached himself for having allowed her to lead him too easily. But what other in his place, unless, indeed, a Cato, would have been wiser than he? These reasonable reflections were soon effaced by the sweet impressions of intimacy, and Henri was neither of an age to be virtuous, nor had he the character to wish to be so.

After breakfasting with Felicia, Henri returned to Florence, but while walking there he was no longer the same. That which the evening before had hardly attracted his regard, or fixed his attention, now appeared to him most delightful; he thought and breathed nothing but pleasure. He found Franck very little disquieted on his account, for having almost divined his master's adventure, he had not troubled himself about his absence.

Henri was not long in returning to Felicia, whom he found making her toilet.

"Where are you going, my dearest?"

"My dear, the weather is superb; we will go and dine in the country, and as they are giving a very charming play this evening, on our return to Florence, we will go and see it."

Felicia was soon ready, and behold our young people in the mood for rambling in the fields and woods and committing a thousand follies. Felicia had not wished that Lesbie should accompany her, and Henri had ordered Franck to remain in Florence, because one has no need of servants when one goes to walk with the one whom he loves. The country is delightful when one is happy, each group of trees, each delightful view, affords the utmost pleasure; the silence of the woods, the majesty of the forests, expand through all our being an emotion which elevates the soul and makes the heart beat softly. If, on the contrary, some deep grief troubles us, the charm of the country does not lessen our sorrow, the silence of nature adds to our melancholy, the eye only sees with indifference the beauties which are offered to our notice, and the obscurity of the forest wakens in our mind a thousand sinister thoughts, a thousand projects of destruction.

Henri and Felicia paused to admire all the views which pleased them. They had walked for a long time, and although they had rested occasionally they were at last really tired.

"Truly, monsieur, I can hardly walk, I can

never get as far as the place where we are to have dinner."

"But, madame, is that my fault? Have I refused to sit down whenever it pleased you?"

"Oh, no, my friend. I shall not be able to go out again for a week. Come, monsieur, we must go on."

"You're right; let us go and get some dinner."

"Oh, willingly, for I am hungry."

"And I also."

Our young people began to look for a cottage where they could find some dinner.

"My dear, we must have lost ourselves, for there is not a house in sight."

"I am afraid so, too, my dearest."

"Heavens! If night should surprise us in this solitary place."

"That would be very unfortunate!"

"Yes, for I am very timid."

"But, my dearest, I shall defend you if anyone attacks us."

"That's a great consolation."

At last, after walking for a long time, they reached a road and saw an isolated house. It was time, for night had begun to fall. They went up to the house and saw with joy that it was really an inn, very small and humble in appearance, it is true, but it was for them like the manna sent to the people of Israel. The innkeeper, who did not

appear accustomed to seeing people, received them with the greatest politeness, offering in advance all they desired, and assuring them that they would be satisfied with the supper.

"But what will you give us?" said Henri to the innkeeper.

"Monsieur, you shall have some macaroni."

"I don't want any," said Felicia, "one eats nothing else in this horrible country."

"Well, madame, I will give you some cheese and some cakes, and you shall tell me how you like them."

"What," cried Henri, "cheese and cakes to satisfy one's appetite when one has eaten nothing since morning!"

"And when one has so well earned an appetite," said Felicia.

"What can I do, monsieur, I offer you the best I have."

"What! Have you nothing else in the house?"

"Forgive me, monsieur, I have a little fowl which I have been keeping for a fortnight for some such occasion."

"The devil, it should be tender."

"Delicious, monsieur, delicious."

"In that case serve it to us quickly."

"Monsieur, there is a little difficulty there."

"What is it?"

"Why it has been already ordered by two officers who arrived here before you, and who are

playing cards upstairs while awaiting their supper."

"The devil! That's a nuisance," said Henri.

"But, my dear," said Felicia, "these gentlemen will no doubt be gallant enough to yield their supper to a lady, for it is impossible that they should be as hungry as we are."

"Ah, madame," said the innkeeper, "you know young men no longer pride themselves on their gallantry."

"No matter, Monsieur Innkeeper," resumed Henri, "do us the favor of speaking to these gentlemen and try to induce them to accede to our request."

"I'll go, monsieur, and do my best."

During his absence Henri laid a table for their supper. He was no less impatient than Felicia to know the result of their host's mission, and was beginning to doubt of his success when the sound of several persons coming down the stairs warned them that the gentlemen were about to answer their request in person.

"Let us see this lady," said one of them.

"Is she pretty," said the other.

Henri glanced smilingly at Felicia and perceived with astonishment that she had changed color. The two soldiers entered the room laughing. They were two handsome young men, who looked like scapegraces.

"Forgive me, madame," said one of them,

approaching Felicia, "if we take the liberty of offering it ourselves. But whom do I see?—It is Felicia," addressing his comrade.

"Yes, my faith, so it is," answered the other.

Henri reddened with anger. Felicia sought in vain to screen her features from the scrutiny of these gentlemen, and did not know how to put a good face upon it. One of the soldiers came forward and, cavalierly folding Felicia in his arms, "What, darling, do I see you again," he said, and was about to kiss her, but Felicia forcibly pushed him away.

"What," cried he, "will you be so cruel. Why, when you played 'The Queens,' in the great theatre at Naples you were not so haughty as that."

"What do you intend to insinuate by that, monsieur," said Henri, furiously approaching the soldier.

"Hang it, monsieur, you know very well what I mean."

"Is this a new lover, then, Felicia," resumed the other soldier, mockingly, "I compliment you upon him; he is still young, and you will be able to form him."

"Insolent fellow!" said Henri, looking at the other with eyes sparkling with anger, "I will teach you that I have no need of lessons to learn how to chastise men of your kind."

So saying Henri struck the soldier who was

nearest him. The latter, furious, drew his sabre and came at Henri as quick as lightning. The latter warded the stroke with a round table, which he used as a shield. The other officer quickly loosed Felicia, that he might join his comrade, and the young woman escaped from the room. The two soldiers were like lions around Henri, but the latter did marvels and, while warding off their blows with the table with Achillean ardor, he sent everything at them which he could find to his hand, pots, bottles, chairs, pitchers, all flew from one side to the other in the inn. The innkeeper tried to make peace and to separate the combatants and in mingling among them he received a stroke of the sabre meant for Henri, and rolled under the benches and tables shouting that he was dead. Our hero had the good fortune to hit one of the officers in the head with a bottle which he threw at him, and the blow stunned him so completely that he fell unconscious by the side of the innkeeper. His comrade, infuriated by this, set with fresh vigor on Henri, who was beginning to lose his strength, and perhaps would have been obliged to succumb to his adversary had not a crowd of peasants, who had been sought by the innkeeper's wife, come in to put an end to the fight. Henri profited by the tumult and reached the door. Two horses were tied in the courtyard, he took one of them, mounted, and arrived in Florence at a mad gallop.

"What, monsieur, is that you? I didn't think that you were going to sleep here this evening."

"No, Franck, we shall not sleep here again."

"What do you say, monsieur?"

"Go quickly, pay our host, and saddle our horses. We leave immediately."

"What, monsieur, in the middle of the night?"

"Come, no reflections, do as I tell you."

Franck hastened to obey, for he saw that his master was not in a humor to listen to his representations. The horses being ready, Henri and Franck mounted them, and left Florence in the middle of the night.

CHAPTER VIII

Rome

"It must be confessed, monsieur, that destiny is a queer thing and that her freaks are not to be accounted for. How often is one foiled in his dearest plans at the moment when they are apparently about to become successful. Then again a chance happiness, good fortune of one kind or another, comes to one when one has lost all hope; and when one thinks one is going to a ball, crack, one breaks an arm or a leg, and there he is in bed for six months; in truth, monsieur, if human beings were only reasonable, they would form no plans whatever for the future and tranquilly await what destiny happens to throw in their way."

It was M. Franck who, while trotting beside his master, was amusing himself by giving vent to his reflections. Although but a simple servant, Franck had observed, reflected, and in speaking so to Henri, he reasoned from events that had come to his own knowledge. The reasonings of the greatest philosophers are often reducible to destiny.

"And to what are we indebted for all this rhodomontade," said Henri to Franck, arousing himself from his reflections.

"To the fact, monsieur, that we are on the way to Rome at a moment when I least thought of being here, and you also, perhaps."

"He's right," said Henri to himself, but he would not relate to Franck an adventure which had wounded his self-respect and which he wished to forget as soon as possible.

"Don't you feel that it is raining, monsieur?" said Franck to Henri, after an hour's silence.

"That's true, but what can we do about it."

"My faith, monsieur, I don't see what should prevent our putting ourselves under shelter rather than allowing ourselves to get wet to the bone; for I believe that this is the commencement of a storm."

"You're right; well, then, let's look for a place where we can stay until the storm has passed."

"That's all very well to say, monsieur, but I don't see any such place."

"Let's go on a little farther."

After looking for some time, Henri perceived an old building which was apparently falling into ruin, and which appeared to be utterly abandoned.

"Wait, Franck, you see those old walls, we can find a shelter there."

"I doubt it, monsieur, for that building looks to be in a very bad state and has perhaps, for a long time, served only as a retreat for robbers."

"Are you afraid of going there?"

"Oh, indeed, no, monsieur; for if it is my des-

tiny to be murdered, do the best I can, I shall not be able to avoid it."

"Come, I see your philosophy is good for something. Let us urge our horses and hasten to get there, for the storm is increasing."

Henri and Franck arrived at last at the old ruined building, which seemed to be an ancient convent. They crossed a court filled with rubbish and entered a vast gallery to which time had been a little more lenient.

"Do you know, Franck, there is something romantic about this neighborhood, and I should not be surprised if some extraordinary adventure were to happen to us here."

"Nor I either, monsieur; besides, they say they are very common in this country."

He had hardly spoken when a slight sound came from the end of the gallery.

"Did you hear that, Franck?"

"It's some one who is listening to us."

"Come on," said Henri, "I am curious to know who it is."

Franck and his master immediately walked in the direction of the sound, but in the measure in which they advanced it seemed to them that some one receded before them. At the end of the gallery they found a staircase up which they groped; the person who was trying to escape them, in his haste made a false step, and rolled down the steps. Henri held him and seized him by the collar.

"Oh, mercy! do not kill me, Monsieur Robber," said he, throwing himself at Henri's feet.

"Who are you?" asked the latter.

"A poor domestic who has not a sou."

"Are you alone here?"

"No, Monsieur Robber, I am with my mistress, who sent me to investigate the place."

"Lead me to her."

"Yes, Monsieur Robber, willingly."

Henri still held the unknown, of whose truth he was suspicious.

The latter led them to a room behind the gallery, opened the door, and exclaimed, "Here's the chief of the band!"

Henri was very much surprised at finding himself in a room where some one had made a good fire and lighted several torches, and on perceiving a lady of thirty years, with another woman much younger, and four men in livery grouped behind her. At the shout which Henri's conductor uttered, the lady started with fright, and the four men jumped for their carbines.

"Don't be so much frightened, gentlemen," said Henri, laughing; "I am not a robber, but a traveller, and this is my servant. I was very desirous to see where this man would lead me, and to know with whom I had to deal."

Henri then approached the lady and excused himself for the fright which he had caused her, and confessed that he had not expected to find

himself in such good society in a neighborhood which appeared abandoned. The lady told him that she was the Marchesa di Belloni, that she had been visiting one of her estates near Florence, and was returning to Rome when the storm had surprised her near the old building, and she had preferred to enter it rather than to expose the health of her servants.

"I sent this man on a tour of discovery," said she, pointing out to Henri the man who had served as guide, "and knowing his cowardice, I expected some stupidity on his part, but I am delighted that he has been the cause of our meeting."

Henri responded to this compliment in the most gallant manner, and also told the marchesa his name and the object of his journey. When she learned Henri's name and title she appeared still more pleased with the adventure and they were soon in animated conversation. Franck, for his part, sought to make conversation with the young person who seemed to be the marchesa's lady's maid, but Mademoiselle Julia, for that was her name, scarcely listened to Franck and incessantly ogled Henri.

The marchesa and Henri forgot while talking that the night was passing, but the servants, who were probably not so well entertained as their mistress, noticed that the day was beginning to break.

The marchesa inquired as to the weather, they

told her that the storm was past, but that it still rained heavily; she then begged Henri to accept a seat in her carriage, and Henri, who had noticed Julia's glances, and who greatly admired the marchesa, eagerly accepted, and they went down into the court to make ready to resume their journey.

"Well," said Franck to himself, while following his master, "I see that this adventure, which appeared so romantic at first, will simply finish like any other."

Henri was in the carriage with the two women. The marchesa desired him to sit with her and Mademoiselle Julia seated herself opposite Henri, pouting a little with very charming effect. She was a very pretty little woman, was this Julia; she had delightfully expressive eyes, and she bent them constantly on Henri when she saw that her mistress was not looking. As to the marchesa, she was a perfectly beautiful woman; in addition to her elegant figure and noble bearing, her face was regularly beautiful; her hair was of a glossy black, and her flashing, vivacious eyes indicated an ardent and impetuous disposition.

The travellers arrived at Rome without other accident, and the marchesa on leaving Henri invited him to come often to see her.

Henri promised, after glancing at Julia, who seemed to desire, no less than her mistress, that he should accept the invitation.

"At least," said Henri to himself, while trav-

ersing the streets of Rome in search of a lodging, "this woman is really a marchesa and doesn't act the princesses at any theatre."

After putting up at the best inn of the city, Henri called on several merchants, that he might be dressed very richly and according to the latest mode.

"Monsieur," said Franck to his master, "are you aware that the marchesa will ruin you if this continues?"

"Idiot! Do you think that my father will refuse me any money that I need?"

"Mercy, monsieur, he won't allow you to continue on your travels, but will order you to return home."

"Well, then it will be time to settle ourselves."

On the evening of his arrival, Henri went to the house of the Marchesa di Belloni. She lived in the most beautiful part of the city; her hotel was most magnificent, and everything about it was luxurious and splendid.

A brilliant and numerous company were gathered there. The marchesa received Henri in the most gracious manner, and presented him to some very distinguished people with so much impressment that they overwhelmed him with the most polite attentions.

Our hero had never yet found himself in such brilliant society; surrounded by charming women, who seemed to vie with each other to please him,

and flattered by the attentions of the marchesa, he was supremely conscious of the honor done him.

However, as in the midst of so many people he could not often chat with the marchesa, he sat down to pass the time at a card table.

Soon the sight of the gold which shone before him heated his imagination. Wishing to imitate the persons with whom he was playing he lost in one moment all that he had on him.

He rose from the table and was walking quietly about the room examining the different personages which filled it, when he half thought that he saw at the entrance door someone who was making a sign to him. The idea of Julia, whom he had not yet seen, immediately flashed into his mind, and wishing to assure himself as to the truth he approached the marchesa to make his adieus. She told him that she expected him the next morning to breakfast; Henri promised and slowly left the room. Hardly had he crossed the doorsill when a woman took him by the hand and told him to follow her. Henri saw that it was not Julia, but allowed her to conduct him. She took him through a long series of unlighted rooms, then she paused in one which was smaller than the others, told him to wait for a moment, and left him alone in the darkness.

"What does this mean?" thought Henri, "this adventure is taking a very spicy turn, but I must not forget that I am in Italy and that this is a

country of miracles." Thus thinking he seated himself on a sofa to await the end of his adventure.

"What! You've gone to sleep" said someone to Henri, in a low, soft voice, pushing him gently.

"Is it you, charming Julia?" answered Henri awakening. "It seems to me that you've allowed me to sleep for a long time."

Julia confessed that he had been there for nearly an hour, and that she had been very much afraid that he would have left.

"Why, where should I have gone, I don't know my way about this hotel, why did you leave me alone so long?"

"Because the marchesa called me, and I could not leave her sooner. But leave me alone, monsieur, I beg of you, I have something very important to say to you."

"You shall tell it to me another time."

"No, monsieur, have done kissing me, — if the marchesa should come."

Despite Julia's efforts Henri profited by the darkness to renew his audacious conduct, and succeeded in obtaining the kisses which she had never had the intention of refusing him.

"Now you will listen to me, I hope, monsieur."

"Oh, yes, my dear Julia, I am all ears."

"You must know, monsieur, that — good heavens! I believe the marchesa is coming."

"I really do hear some noise."

"O heavens! and she must pass through here to go into her bedroom."

"Why, should she see me what harm will it do?"

"O monsieur, I shall be lost beyond all hope."

"I shall say that I lost myself in the hotel, and want to get out of it."

"Oh, you don't know the marchesa's suspicious character. She doubts everything. She loves you I am certain, and we shall both be lost."

"What shall we do then?"

"She is coming; I can hear her voice; we must hide."

"But where?"

"Wait, in this closet; there is room enough there for you."

"But I shall stifle in there."

"No you won't, and I shall come and let you out as soon as madame has gone to bed."

It was time that Henri should hide himself, for the marchesa soon came into the room holding a candle in her hand.

"Oh, are you there, Julia? Where have you been? For two hours I have been looking everywhere for you."

"But, madame, I was in your room to see that nothing was lacking for you."

"Why are you here without a light?"

"Madame, it's because mine has gone out."

"Come, that's enough; come and undress me."

"Madame is going to bed already?"

"What do you mean by already; it is nearly three o'clock in the morning."

"Ah, you are right, madame."

Julia followed the marchesa, cursing the fate which separated her from the one who so greatly needed her assistance. In fact, Henri was not at all at his ease in a closet where he could not change his position; and where the insufficiency of air accentuated his martyrdom. Vainly he endeavored to half open the door of his cage. Julia, to make things secure, had carried away the key, and the closet only opened from the outside.

"Ah," said Henri to himself, "my tutor Mullern was right in telling me that women would make me act very foolishly."

At length, after an anxious half hour, Henri resolved to leave a position which had become insupportable. Indeed, he would have waited in vain for Julia to come to his succor. The marchesa, who appeared to suspect something, sent Julia into a closet which opened into her bedroom, and shut the door on her, so that the poor child was obliged to abandon her lover to the mercy of another woman; but she hoped that Henri, fatigued by his evening, would sleep quietly where she had left him.

"My faith! If it pleases heaven," said Henri "I must get out of here." He began by shaking

the door of the closet, and perceived with joy that by lifting it a little he could get it off the hinges; he profited by his discovery, and was soon outside. But that was not all; he must leave the hotel, which was a matter of great difficulty. Henri found on leaving his hiding place that he was in the same darkness as before, and how should he find his way back? How could he avoid making a mistake?

"Come, I'll walk straight on," said Henri; "that'll lead somewhere, at any rate."

After groping about a little, he found an open door, and went into another room.

"Let's look about a bit, and see if there's not a staircase," said Henri to himself. But while groping along the wall he found a bed instead of a staircase before him.

"The devil!" said he; "perhaps it's the marchesa's bed."

A low sigh which came to his ear warned him that it was occupied, and not caring to disturb anyone he was hurriedly leaving, when, in passing near a stand, his coat caught on a porcelain tea-service, which fell to the floor and broke.

"Who's there?" said a faltering voice, which Henri recognized as that of the marchesa.

"What shall I do? Faith," thought Henri, "it's much better to pass for a lover than for a thief; besides it's the only way left for me. I must come out of it as best I can."

Having made up his mind Henri approached the marchesa's bed, and said to her, —

"Excuse my temerity, madame; it is only such love as mine which could excuse my attempt."

"What monsieur, is it you? At this hour, in my room?"

"Yes, madame. I came here to win over your servant, Julia; touched by my passion for her mistress, it was she who hid me in your room."

"Can it be! Ah, I am not so astonished at her embarrassment now; but it is horrible; it is abominable to have the audacity to —"

"What, are you insensible to a love so tender; well, then, I will go, madame; I will leave you forever."

"Stop! Where are you going now? Should anyone see you leave my room I am lost."

"Well, madame, what are your orders?"

"Remain here, it must be so, for it is the only way to save my reputation."

The next morning at daybreak, after bidding the marchesa good-by most tenderly, Henri softly opened the door and descended the stairs; he had taken but a few steps when he found himself face to face with Julia.

"What, is that you, monsieur?"

"Yes, Julia, it is I myself."

"And how did you manage to get out of the closet?"

"I managed the best way I could, but, in truth,

my dear Julia, I am too hurried now to be able to tell you about it."

"If you will come up to my room, now that madame the marchesa is asleep—"

"No, sweetheart, it is time that I should go back to my inn; this evening I will tell you all that you wish to know."

So saying Henri went down the stairs and hastily left the marchesa's hotel.

"Really I don't understand it," said Julia to herself, and she awaited impatiently the moment when she should go to her mistress.

Towards noon the marchesa rang; Julia went down in all haste, not knowing whether to fear or to hope; but she was agreeably surprised to find the marchesa in a charming humor, who called her nothing but her dear, her good Julia. Not knowing what to augur by so flattering a welcome, Julia ended in believing that her mistress knew nothing, while the marchesa showered caresses and favors upon her maid, believing that Julia had divined matters which it was impossible for her to even mention.

On returning to his lodgings, Henri wrote to the colonel to ask for some money, and sent Franck to post the letter. Franck, who saw the address, looked at his master, smiling, with an air which seemed to say, "My predictions are accomplished." But Henri threw himself on his bed. without deigning to answer his glance, and Franck

said to himself, — "If it is his destiny to lose his money, there is no way of preventing it."

Several months passed in the same manner, Henri sharing his time between the marchesa, Julia and play. The colonel had sent the money which he had asked for and Henri, having the means, continued the same mode of life; besides luck, which had at first been unfavorable to him, turned, and he ardently gratified a passion which made him at times neglect the marchesa and Julia.

Things were at this pass when a young Neapolitan countess appeared in the marchesa's society. Henri immediately felt that love for her which he had already experienced for the marchesa. For her part the young countess could not see Henri with indifference; but the marchesa, who was excessively jealous, read his new passion in Henri's eyes and resolved to revenge herself for his infidelity.

The occasion was not long in offering. Henri received a note in which some one invited him to wait before the countess' house, and informed him that they would gain him access to the one he loved. Not doubting but that this note came from the countess herself, Henri, at the height of his happiness, sent word to the marchesa that he was indisposed and could not wait on her.

The hour for the rendezvous drew near; Henri was preparing to start when someone knocked several times at the door.

"Can it be the marchesa?" said Henri to Franck, "we mustn't open —" but the words, "Open, open, without fear," pronounced in a faltering voice, made Henri desire to see who it could be.

He opened the door and Julia came into the room.

"You are astonished at my visit, monsieur," said Julia to Henri, "but when you know my motive I hope that you will give me credit for what I have done."

"What do you wish to say, Julia?"

"I wish to say, monsieur, that the marchesa is aware of your love for the young Neapolitan countess who came a short time ago to her house."

"What, Julia, you can think —"

"Ah, monsieur, you cannot deceive one who knows how to read your heart, but I love you too much to revenge myself, even though I could do so at the present moment; instead, I wish to save you from the snare into which you are about to fall."

"What do you mean, Julia?"

"You received a note this morning."

"That's true."

"Someone appointed a meeting with you this evening at midnight, in front of the countess's house."

"But how have you learned all that?"

"Well, why shouldn't I learn it, since the marchesa wrote that note to you herself."

"Herself!"

"To see if you will betray her by going to the rendezvous. She is an Italian, I have told you enough."

"What! You think she would be capable of—"

"Jealousy has made her furious against you. Believe me, you had better not go to this rendezvous."

"Be easy, my dear Julia; if I go there I shall take my precautions."

"Well, at least I have warned you; now I shall leave you; your fate is in your own hands."

"Goodby, my dear Julia; believe me I shall not forget while I live what you have done for me." Saying these words, Henri tenderly pressed Julia's hand against his heart, and she hurriedly left.

"She's a good girl, is this Julia," said Franck to his master, when she had left; "I didn't hear what she said to you, but I am sure it was for your good."

"Franck!"

"Monsieur."

"Go and prepare two horses, and pack our valises."

"What, monsieur! Are we going to leave here?"

"Do what I tell you, wait for me here, and I will return in a few moments."

"Very well, monsieur."

Henri wrapped himself in his cloak, and hastened to the appointed place. He had a great curiosity to see for himself what means the marchesa would take to procure her revenge, but he was careful to take under his cloak a sword and a pair of pistols. Midnight commenced to strike as Henri reached the countess's house.

"I am perhaps come too late," said he to himself, "and the projected vengeance will not take place."

While waiting, he walked up and down in front of the house, situated on the corner of a little gloomy street, which on account of its isolated situation was eminently fitted to serve the marchesa's design. He had waited for some minutes when a man wrapped in a cloak and holding a dark lantern left the street and came towards him.

"You are prompt," said the man, addressing him; "that is well, follow me, and I will lead you to the countess's house."

"And why should we not go in at this door?" asked Henri of the unknown.

"Because you would be seen by everybody, and as there is a secret entrance which opens into the street before us, madame, the countess, has told me to introduce you by that."

"In that case, go on, and I will follow you."

Henri appeared to be following his guide with-

out suspicion, but he softly drew his pistols from beneath his coat, and held them ready for any event. Hardly had they turned the corner of the street when two other men came from an ambuscade, trusting to fall upon Henri unobserved; but our hero received them pistol in fist, and taking aim at them, point blank, extended the two dead at his feet. The man with the lantern, on seeing his comrades fall, immediately took flight; Henri ran after him, but the murderer knew the turns of the town better than he, and was soon lost to sight. Reflecting that should he pursue this man he might meet others, Henri thought that it would be more prudent to go back to his inn; and after many detours he found himself there.

"Oh! it seems to me you've had a warm evening," said Franck, as Henri placed his pistols on the table.

"Yes, my dear Franck, reload my pistols."

"Oh, are you going to begin again, monsieur?"

"No, we are going to leave."

"It seems to me you have had enough of it; where are we going, monsieur, to Naples?"

"No, I have had enough of Italy."

"Much better, faith; for I am tired of this country also."

"We shall go to Paris; perhaps I shall be more fortunate than I have been up to the present, and shall there find her for whom I would give my life."

"What, monsieur, are you thinking of her still?"

"Am I thinking of her still? Ah! Franck, do you believe that these passions of a moment which have occupied my mind since I started on my travels can ever efface the remembrance of my dear Pauline? No, these seductive women have filled my head, troubled my senses, but neither of them have had my heart."

"In that case, monsieur, I see well that it must be love which you feel for your unknown —"

"Yes, the tenderest, the sincerest love."

"But the horses are ready, monsieur," said Franck.

"What do you say to starting then?"

"It is singular," said Franck, on leaving Rome with his master, "that we always start on our travels in the middle of the night; it must be our destiny to do so."

CHAPTER IX

Paris. An Adventure of Another Kind

Henri and Franck arrived at Paris after stopping for some time at both Turin and Lyons, where, however, nothing of a remarkable nature happened to them.

"My faith, monsieur," said Franck to his master on entering the capital of gayety and pleasure, "the very first sight of this good city of Paris pleases me more than any of those we have visited. See all these people coming and going, it's a perpetual movement; at each step one finds something curious or interesting. If one wished to be melancholy here, he could not. As for the women, monsieur, they are charming, delightful; tell me, frankly, have we seen women anywhere else with the same carriage, the same grace, the same elegance? women who look at a man with a smile so flattering, so expressive? Monsieur, I am really enchanted."

"The devil, Franck, you are becoming eloquent."

"It is this living panorama, this interesting scenery which inspires me, monsieur," said Franck warmly.

"Leave your scenery and see about finding a hotel where I can live comfortably."

Henri lodged himself in the neighborhood of the Chaussée-d'Antin, and on the evening of their arrival he visited the plays and the most frequented cafés of the city; wearied and fatigued he went back to his hotel and found Franck awaiting him with an air a little less cheerful than that of the morning.

"What's the matter, Franck?" asked Henri, "are you tired already of Paris?"

"Oh, no, monsieur, it is not that."

"Why, then, do you look so gloomy this evening, for you were so cheerful in the morning?"

"Why, monsieur, it's because I've had a little adventure."

"An adventure, let's hear what it is, tell me all about it."

"Very willingly, monsieur, if it will give you pleasure. You must know, then, that after you left I went to the Palais Royal, because someone told me it was the most curious place in the city. I had been there for an hour admiring all that it holds, and delighting myself with each new object which met my eyes, when a very well-dressed man with an honest appearance approached me to ask me the way to some street or other. 'My faith, sir,' I said to him, 'I don't know any more than you do, for I arrived only today in the city and am an entire stranger."

"'You're a stranger,' he said to me, 'why, then, so am I; but wait, since chance has thrown us together, if you like we will pass the evening so.' I accepted, pleased to find someone with whom I could chat in a city where I knew nobody. We continued to walk about and chat when the devil, or rather fate, made the new comer speak of playing billiards. You know, sir, that is my favorite game, and that I can play it pretty well."

"Oh, you've already told me that, well, no doubt you played it."

"Yes, monsieur, that is to say, my man proposed a game and I accepted. We went into a café and entered a billiard room, but as it was occupied and the game was almost done we remained to look on. One of the two players was weaker than the other, and my stranger joked him on his playing. 'I bet two louis,' said he at once, 'that you won't hit that ball.' The ball was good enough, the person took the bet and won. My man seemed disappointed at having lost, and said he would take his revenge. The occasion was not long in presenting itself. The person who took the two louis was about to play, he had absolutely nothing to do but to slightly push a ball into the pocket which was already half there. Well, my man had the effrontery to say that he could not do it. I answered that he would do it. Can you believe, monsieur, that he had the assurance to bet me twenty louis that he would not. I accepted

immediately, I had, unfortunately, all my money about me."

"And you won?"

"On the contrary, monsieur, the awkward chap, who had already made a stroke a hundred times more difficult, hit the ball so hard that in place of putting it in the pocket, he put himself out. Then, with despair in my heart, I gave up all that I possessed, I had twenty louis less six francs, but the winner willingly forgave me the remainder, and I left the café cursing the destiny which had caused me to meet this fate."

Henri could not refrain from laughing at the adventure which had happened to poor Franck, however, he advised him to be more prudent another time, and, above all, to mistrust those pretended strangers who only pose as such in order that they may dupe the real ones.

Henri had been for some days in Paris when one evening at the play he found himself placed behind a lady who appeared to merit his attention; she was tall, well made, with an agreeable manner and an expressive face, and did not appear indifferent to the glances which her neighbor cast at her. Henri, delighted at his new conquest, would willingly have talked to her, but she had with her a fat man covered with diamonds and jewels, who looked like a retired dealer in beef; who appeared to be as much embarrassed by his two watches as by his enormous expanse of waistcoat,

and who occupied three-quarters of the box where Henri was. Seeing very well that he could not declare his sentiments while she had this man with her, Henri contented himself with leaving the play and ordering Franck to follow her with the carriage, while he tried to obtain some information about the lady. Henri impatiently awaited the return of his valet, and at last the latter arrived.

"Well, my dear Franck," said Henri, "have you good news to tell me?"

"Yes, monsieur, excellent."

"Have you found out where the lady in question lives?"

"Yes, monsieur, in the Boulevard des Italiens."

"Good! and did you learn anything else?"

"Yes, monsieur, the porter of the house is rather gossipy and made no difficulty about chatting with me."

"Bravo! Well, this lady—"

"She is an opera dancer, monsieur."

"An opera dancer," said Henri to himself, "the devil! There's much to win and to lose with that kind of woman."

"I learned further," continued Franck, "that the fat man who was with her was an old purveyor, who keeps her like a princess, because you know, monsieur, it's very good form to keep an opera dancer."

"Oh, is it good form, Franck?"

"Yes, monsieur, and yours has already had

among her lovers two Russian princes, four financiers, six Englishmen, ten ministers of finance, three bankers, and she now has her ninth contractor."

"You are joking, Franck."

"No, monsieur, it is because she is in vogue; she is the woman à la mode, the beauty of the day; these are the porter's precise words."

"Yes; ah, she is the woman à la mode. In that case, as I wish to follow the fashion, I shall make up to the dancer."

"You're right, monsieur, that is the best way to make people talk about you. I bet, however, that it won't last very long; at the pace she is going we shall soon find her on the list of reformed women."

"Don't be uneasy, Franck, if that woman loves me she'll not ruin me."

"O monsieur, to expect love from a dancer is to be too exacting."

The next morning Henri wrote a billet-doux to his beauty and sent it by Franck. The latter soon returned with an answer from the lady, who invited Henri to go and take coffee with her the next day.

"Well, now, Franck," said Henri, "you see I've touched her heart."

"It's possible, monsieur."

"But tell me, did she ask any questions?"

"Certainly, monsieur, she asked your name and

your titles, 'The Count von Framberg,' said she, when I had told her your name, and immediately she wrote the note I brought in answer to yours. She is a woman who does not receive the first comer."

"She would be one of the last to do so."

Henri, in order to pass the time until the next day, recommenced his tour of the city, and visited the public places. While passing near a gambling-house, the desire of increasing his money, that he might make a brilliant figure in Paris, urged him to go in. He hesitatingly placed a louis on the red, which he fully expected to lose; but he won. Fortune continued to smile on him, he saw that he had struck a vein of luck and played higher. Finally, at the end of an hour, he left with thirty thousand francs more than he had possessed on entering.

By this stroke he was enabled to be in the fashion and to eclipse all the exquisites of the day. He went back to his hotel and gave Franck orders to hire a well-appointed carriage and sent him at once to a jeweler, a horsedealer, and a dancing-master. Franck, astonished, ran from one place to another, without knowing what all this meant, but rendering thanks to the destiny which had made a millionaire of his master. However, thirty thousand francs does not go far in Paris; the jeweler and the horsedealer would have sold him goods worth double that amount. Henri realized

that he was not so rich as he had believed, but thought he had only to return to the roulette table in order to win more. While waiting he contented himself with buying a horse for his carriage and a diamond pin for himself; he then sent away his tradesmen, promising to see them again soon.

Henri awaited the next day impatiently, for being rich does not prevent one from suffering from ennui. After making a careful toilet he got into his cabriolet and went to the Boulevard des Italiens. It was near midday, and at that hour the streets of Paris are filled with people; above all, in a neighborhood so well frequented as that through which Henri was passing. Our young man, ardently desirous of reaching his lady's house, drove recklessly, and had already several times barely missed running over someone, it being only his adroitness that prevented these mishaps. In turning a corner of the street he had not perceived a wagon which was coming on his side. The wagoner, according to the custom of these gentlemen, did not go out of his way for a cabriolet; Henri came into violent contact with the wagon, and his light vehicle, unable to sustain the shock, upset, and in its fall knocked down an old woman who was leaving a shop where she had been to get some lights for her cat. Screams of "Help, I am killed!" and the cabriolet in the gutter, soon attracted an immense crowd of those loungers with which Paris abounds.

"It's a woman who has been crushed by a cabriolet driven by a young man," said one.

"These coxcombs don't care what they do to anybody else. The cabriolet is all broken."

"It's surprising," said another, "that this little woman should have had the strength to overturn a carriage."

While they talked thus, the wagoner had thought it prudent to go off with his wagon, for fear that some one should make him pay damages. Henri got out of the cabriolet, consigning wagoners and idlers to the devil. Franck who was behind the cabriolet had barely escaped with his life, but he came out of it with nothing worse than a black eye, and some bumps on his head. The old woman, who was more frightened than hurt, but who wished to profit by the adventure, filled the air with her shrieking and groaning. Henri thought he would return quietly home, and charged Franck to raise his cabriolet, when the crowd which surrounded them advised the old woman to hale him before a magistrate.

"Before the magistrate," said Henri; "what do you want me to do?"

"Oh, my fine sir, do you think that any one may run over poor people like this, and that nothing will be said about it?"

"You idiot; I am the victim in the matter; hasn't my cabriolet been broken?"

"And this poor woman whom you've crushed,

don't you think it necessary to give her something to indemnify her, if she's killed?"

"If she is killed what the devil do you think I can do about it?"

"All the same, she must have some consolation."

Our hero realized that he could not get out of it without parting with some money. He approached the old woman, put fifteen louis in her hand, and in this manner he escaped going before the magistrate.

"Just see how fortunate that old bawler is," said a gossip to her neighbor; "for a trifle of that sum, I'd be willing to have as much happen to me any day."

"There are some people who have good luck," answered the other.

"It's owing to her cat, that she got that."

"She won't be any richer," said a third; "she's an old gambler; she'll go and put all that money in the lottery."

Henri returned home, muddy, tired, and in despair because he had missed his rendezvous; however, he dressed himself again, took a carriage and ventured to present himself at his lady's house. He was agreeably surprised to find that she was still there; he did not know that it was good form to make a person wait two hours for one. The lady received him as one whom she had known for a long time and he saw that Franck

play me these tricks, and I am going to make the one who is breakfasting with you, pay up."

"You are a fool, Floricourt; I am alone, I assure you."

"I am not taken in by these stories; since he is in hiding, perhaps he is afraid to meet me, and I will take from him all desire to return here." So saying, the young man looked all around him, and felt with his foot under all the tables. At last he perceived Henri, who remained motionless before the glass door which the officer opened suddenly, and gave Henri a slap in the face before our hero had time to defend himself. Henri was about to fall on his adversary when the dame came between them to separate them.

"Monsieur," said Henri to the officer, "if you are a man of honor, you will account to me for the insult which you have given me."

"Oh, monsieur, has not had enough," answered the other sneeringly, "very well, I will give you a stronger lesson."

"There is no need of conversation, monsieur, I do not desire it. Here is my address. I will wait for you tomorrow at my lodgings at four o'clock in the morning."

So saying, Henri left, without deigning to glance at the woman who was with them.

"This also is my own fault," said he to himself, when he reached his hotel; "but since I have been travelling I have done nothing but

foolish actions. O father! if you knew your son's conduct, how much disappointment it would cause you; and you, good Mullern, if I had paid more heed to your advice I should not be where I am; but since destiny is against me, since I cannot discover her who would have made my life happy, I swear that I will soon return to Framberg."

The officer came punctually to the place of meeting. Henri took his sword, and without saying a single word they went out to the Bois de Boulogne; there each took off his coat and impetuously began to fight.

Henri was weaker in the arms than his adversary, but he was cool and self-possessed, and knew how to adroitly parry every stroke.

Presently the officer, in trying to reach Henri, ran himself through with the latter's sword and fell dead at his feet. Henri ran back to his hotel; it seemed to him that the shade of his unfortunate victim followed on his steps. It is a frightful thing, in fact, to kill a fellow creature for a woman whom one must despise. Henri made a thousand reflections, and his soul was oppressed by the weight of the blood he had shed. Franck was alarmed at seeing his master in a state of depression which was so unusual to him.

"What is the matter, monsieur, has some misfortune come to you?"

"Oh, yes, Franck, a misfortune which I shall never forgive myself."

"What will you have, monsieur, we must take things as destiny sends them."

"Prepare everything for our departure; we shall leave Paris this morning."

"May I know where we are going, monsieur?"

"We are returning to Framberg. I am longing to see my father and that good Mullern who loves me so much."

"My faith, monsieur, I am delighted also. There is nothing so dear as one's father's house."

Henri and Franck advanced slowly over the road towards Germany, the former reflecting somewhat sadly on the results of his travels. What does one gain by travelling about the world? Merely the conviction that there is but little resemblance between real happiness and that of the imagination. Master Franck, although less gloomy than his master, found that a peaceable and tranquil life was worth more than the pleasure of going abroad, and he congratulated those whose destiny it was to stay peaceably in the land of their birth.

Some leagues from Strasburg, Henri stopped in the same forest where some months before Colonel Framberg and Mullern had found shelter.

Desiring to rest for a short time in its shade, he sent Franck on before, and ordered him to wait at the first inn in Strasburg. The tranquillity of the place invited the traveller to rest, and Henri, who had journeyed for several days with-

out stopping, felt the need of yielding to the fatigue which overcame him. He seated himself against a thick clump of bushes, shaded by a majestic oak, and sleep soon closed his eyes.

When he awoke, day was closing. He cautiously thrust his face forward and perceived two men a few steps from him. Their evil-looking faces warned him not to show himself; and as they believed themselves to be alone, he easily heard the following conversation,—

"You are quite sure it was he?"

"Yes, monsieur, I am positively certain, and though it's a devil of a long time since I've seen him, his face is too striking for me to forget it. Besides I obtained some information about him in the inn where he was stopping, and I am sure I was not mistaken."

"And he will pass through this forest?"

"Yes, monsieur, he can't take any other way, and I hastened to tell you that we may not let such a fine chance escape us."

"What do you think we'd better do, Stoffar?"

"Hang it, there's only one thing to do, and that is to rid ourselves of him so that he'll cause us no more uneasiness."

Henri felt his blood boil in his veins, and was ready to throw himself on the two scoundrels, but he reflected that perhaps that was not the best means of saving their intended victim, and he restrained his indignation.

"But," resumed the one who appeared to be the master, "if we content ourselves with seizing his person and keeping him shut up, we shall by that means be able to compel him to tell us what he has done."

"No, monsieur," interrupted the other, "that's of no use at all. Besides, where could you shut him up? In your house? At any moment some one might discover him there, and what would prevent him from escaping, and that would be a pretty business for us. Believe me, in circumstances like this we must not employ half-measures. Once he is dead, you may remain easy, for he is the only one you have to fear!"

"You're right, Stoffar, and I've made up my mind to it —"

The sound of horse's feet interrupted the conversation.

"It is he, monsieur," said one of the men, rising, "he's coming. Let's get ready to give him a warm reception!"

They placed themselves behind some trees. Henri, for his part, had his pistols, and, thanking heaven that he had been chosen as the defender of the unlucky traveller, held himself ready for any event. In a few moments he saw a man on horseback coming his side of the way. It was still light enough for him to distinguish the features of the traveller. It was a man of about forty, tall, and of gentle but melancholy expression, which

told of a heart oppressed by the weight of a deep sorrow.

Henri felt his heart beat violently as the stranger drew near him and forgot in looking on his face the danger which threatened his life; but he was soon roused from this state of mind by the noise which the two men made in running, sword in hand, at the traveller, who, stunned by this sudden attack, had not time to draw his weapons and would inevitably have been done to death had not Henri, quick as lightning, hurled himself on the murderers. The two men, affrighted by this sudden apparition, thought of nothing but flight. Henri took aim at them with his two pistols; one of the scoundrels fell dead, the other, untouched, escaped into the depths of the forest.

Henri thought that it would be imprudent to follow him, and turned towards the one he had saved. The traveller did not know how to sufficiently attest his gratitude to his liberator.

"You owe me no thanks, monsieur," said Henri, "in coming to your help I only fulfilled the duty of a gentleman, and I am sure that in my place you would have done as much. But, believe me, we had better hasten to a more frequented road, for it is growing dark and we may not be so fortunate a second time."

"I am of your opinion, monsieur," answered the stranger, "but you are on foot, it appears to me."

"Yes, I am, for I sent my servant on before with my horse, expecting to reach Strasburg this evening."

"Well, mount behind me; in that way we shall the sooner get out of the forest."

Henri accepted this offer and they set off at a gallop, and on the way entered into details regarding the event which had taken place.

"I didn't think that the forest through which I had to pass was infested with brigands."

"You are mistaken, monsieur, in taking for such the men who attacked you; I am certain they were not robbers."

Then Henri related all he had heard, and noticed that his companion was paying the greatest attention to his story.

"Can it be?" cried the traveller, when Henri had finished speaking. "But, monsieur, did you not hear something further than that?"

"Nothing further, monsieur; but I presume that is sufficient to make you understand who these people were."

"Indeed, you are mistaken, I assure you I know nothing of what you have told me, and know of no enemies capable of such a dastardly crime."

"Hang it, it's very strange!"

"I've never injured anybody, and have done all the good that I could."

"It is often in doing good that one attracts the hatred of the wicked."

"Ah, you are right, monsieur, and you open my eyes."

Here Henri's companion fell into a profound revery, and the latter dared not further question him.

Our two travellers soon reached a frequented road; and as the darkness increased, Henri thought it would be better to wait until the next day to go to Strasburg. They stopped before the first inn.

"You are going to Strasburg, I am coming from there; and since our ways are opposite, I will now say good-by to you."

"What! are you not going to stop here?" queried Henri.

"No, for it will make me late in reaching Paris, where I have important business to finish; but as I expect soon to return to Strasburg, I hope I shall have the pleasure of becoming more intimately acquainted with one who has saved my life."

Henri replied that he did not expect to make a long sojourn.

"But," added he, "as I have as great a desire as yourself that we should meet again, I invite you, if chance should lead you to the place where I live, not to forget that you have in Henri von Framberg a friend who esteems himself happy because he has been able to serve you."

"Henri von Framberg?" exclaimed his com-

panion. "What! You are the son of Colonel Framberg?"

"Certainly," said Henri, "why this astonishment? Do you know my father?"

"I have heard him spoken of, reports of his bravery and his deeds have reached my ears,"

"Why, then, that is one reason the more that you should come to the castle, where, I assure you, you will receive a cordial welcome."

The stranger thanked Henri; the name of Framberg had disturbed him inordinately, which our hero perceived, but he dared not ask him the cause of his agitation and they separated, reiterating assurances of the most sincere friendship.

Henri went into the inn and asked for a private room; there he pondered on his extraordinary adventure and on the new acquaintance he had made. Despite the difference between his age and that of the stranger, Henri felt that he could love him as a brother, and he regretted having forgotten to ask his name. He went to sleep making these reflections, and the next day very early he took a post-chaise and started for Strasburg.

CHAPTER X

He Finds Her

Henri found Franck awaiting him at the inn where he had appointed a meeting. The latter was extremely uneasy at his master's non-arrival on the evening before and Henri gave him a detailed account of all that had happened to him in the interval that had elapsed since they had parted.

"You will confess, monsieur," said Franck, "that you hardly expected to be the hero of such an adventure. I am sure the gentleman whose life you saved must have been very grateful to you; but all the same, if it is his destiny to be murdered, he will not so escape another time."

Henri left Franck and his destiny and went out, that he might look about him, and acquaint himself with the town. Strangely enough, since his adventure of the evening before, the clouds which for some days past had obscured his mind had lifted, his gloomy thoughts were entirely obliterated, he felt as youth should ever feel, cheerful, gay and lighthearted, and there only remained to him the remembrance of his travels,

and of his follies, and the firm resolution that he would conduct himself better in the future.

While making virtuous plans, Henri perceived that he had left the town; he was about to retrace his steps when he heard cries for help. He turned and perceived a young woman struggling with a soldier, who was offering her some rudeness. He ran towards the soldier, who, being a coward, left his prey on seeing a man approach; Henri then offered his services to the young lady, but how can one depict his surprise, his delight, when he recognized in her his dear Pauline.

"What, is it indeed you, mademoiselle?"

"And you, monsieur?"

They were both so much moved that this was all they could say.

Henri contemplated the charms of his sweet friend, and found her even more beautiful than when he had last seen her. As for Pauline, she shared Henri's emotion and pleasure.

"O monsieur," said she, at length, "how I thank heaven for sending you in time to deliver me from the danger I was in."

"Monsieur," answered Henri, sighing, "I am no longer 'Henri' to you then? Formerly you called me so. Has time caused you to forget the happy days we spent together? Ah, Pauline; ah, mademoiselle, I alone have grieved, then, at so long a separation, and you, in seeing me again have not recovered your happiness."

"How unjust you are, Henri! But somebody has told me that you did not love me, that you had forgotten me. Your long absence, the little haste you have evinced in endeavoring to learn my place of abode —"

"What are you saying, Pauline? Heaven is my witness that since our separation I have done everything in my power to learn your address."

"Is that indeed true, Henri? Ah, I must believe you. What you tell me makes me so happy that I cannot afford to doubt it."

Our two lovers forgot in the pleasure of each other's society that anything existed in the world except their love; Pauline was the first to realize that they must separate.

"You must leave me, Henri. While with you I forgot that my good Madame Reinstard is expecting me, and that she will be rendered uneasy by my long absence."

"Where do you live, Pauline?"

"In that house which you see down there, near the gate of the town. I came out only to make some purchases, for Madame Reinstard is ill, and our old servant could not leave her."

"And your father?"

"My father is not at Strasburg just now, but his absence will not be long."

"Well, then, what prevents me from coming to see you?"

"Not this evening, my friend. It is too late

for my good mother to see you. Tomorrow you shall come, and we shall then have time to talk with you."

Henri could hardly consent to leave his dear Pauline, but the hope of seeing her the next day gave him new courage. He conducted his beloved right up to the door of her house, and would not leave her without permission to return again soon.

He then went back to his inn, his heart filled with happiness. There was no longer any question of returning to his father; his Pauline occupied all his thoughts, all his affections. Franck, on learning that his master had found his sweetheart again, exclaimed, —

"Why, monsieur, it was hardly worth the trouble of going so far to look for a woman who was so near us, but Fate had decreed it!"

The next day, almost before it was light, Henri was under the windows of his beloved. It was in the month of November, and the weather was beginning to prove cold. He walked up and down under the casements of his sweetheart, waiting until she should have awakened; but Pauline, who probably had not slept much either, presently half opened her Venetian shutter.

"What, is it you, my friend, so early?"

"Oh, my dear Pauline, how could I sleep when so far from you?"

"I have not slept either, as you may see, but

all the same, it is too early for a visit, monsieur, and you must go."

"Oh, Pauline, you don't love me then."

"But, my friend, Madame Reinstard is not awake yet."

"And I am dying of cold."

"You can't come in, however."

"You would rather see me freeze under your windows. How unkind."

"Well, then, wait, I'll come down."

Pauline did not delay in opening the door to him. How pretty she seemed to Henri's eyes! A simple morning wrapper covered her elegant figure. Her hair, negligently put up, shaded her modest forehead; her eyes, soft and languid, seemed afraid to fix themselves on those of her lover, everything about her inspired love. Henri could not but adore so charming a person. He remained motionless before her, and Pauline blushed with pleasure, divining well the cause of Henri's uneasiness. Where is the woman who does not understand the feeling she has inspired.

Pauline led Henri into a small room opening into the garden belonging to the house; there they waited until Madame Reinstard should arise. Time did not seem long to them, one has so many things to say when one loves. Henri related to Pauline all the adventures which had happened to him on his travels, omitting, however, those which were not of a nature to come to the ears

of his sweetheart. He in turn was extremely desirous of knowing what had happened to Pauline during his absence, — where was her father, what was the motive of his journey? — a thousand things which related, in fact, to the origin of her whom he loved and to her present situation, but he dared not question her, and preferred to wait until he had gained her confidence rather than appear curious or suspicious to her.

Pauline perceived at length that it was the hour when the one who stood to her in the place of mother was accustomed to arise for breakfast. She left Henri to go to Madame Reinstard, promising him to come soon in search of him. During her absence, he occupied himself in examining his sweetheart's dwelling. Everything there was of the greatest simplicity, and indicated that those who lived there had more taste than wealth.

"Ah," said Henri to himself, "she is not happy, I am sure, and she has not enough confidence in me to impart to me the cause of her grief, but I know how to compel her to put confidence in me. I will alleviate her sorrow, and, without wounding her pride, I shall find a way to share with her the wealth which can have no value in my eyes unless it will help me to make her happy."

What he called his wealth was the money he had won by play in Paris, and which he remembered he had not had time to dissipate, since he had left there the next day.

Pauline came to draw him from his reflections by telling him that Madame Reinstard was awaiting him at breakfast. He followed his sweetheart, and found the good lady seated beside her fire. Henri was sharply struck by the change which her illness had wrought in her, at the pallor of her countenance, and the faintness of her voice, which made it clear that she had not long to live; but he took care not to convey to Pauline ideas which would only redouble her grief.

Madame Reinstard gave Henri a most flattering welcome, and appeared charmed to see him. Breakfast passed quickly enough; Henri was near his Pauline, which was all that was necessary for his happiness. When by chance his foot touched that of his sweetheart, when his hand rested for a moment on hers, and he could read in her eyes the emotions she experienced, oh, then, he would not have changed for all the riches of the world the good fortune of finding himself with her. He easily obtained from Madame Reinstard permission to come sometimes to share their solitude — sometimes! which meant every day, for so our lovers understood the word. Pauline told him that during his absence she had greatly neglected her music, and he proposed to bring her the same evening a collection of the newest and prettiest pieces. Pauline softly pressed his hand, Madame Reinstard thanked him in advance for the pleasure he was about to procure

for her dear daughter, and Henri left, promising to return that evening, to bring Pauline what he had promised.

A month passed, during which he spent all his mornings and all his evenings with Pauline. This had grown so customary that when at his usual hour he was not at Madame Reinstard's, he found his Pauline very anxious, and looking sadly from her window to see if he were coming. Henri was at the height of his happiness, he had obtained the love of his sweetheart; Pauline no longer tried to hide from him all the love which she felt for him, and even had she wished to do so, each word, each gesture, would have told him what was passing in her heart. Madame Reinstard herself treated him as her son, and exhibited for him the most tender friendship, but then, Henri was no longer the same young man; he was no longer headstrong, a libertine, a gambler, a heedless fellow; the love which he experienced for Pauline had changed all his sentiments, for a virtuous passion can alone subdue feelings less worthy.

Henri was not long, however, in perceiving that Pauline was agitated by some secret trouble. Madame Reinstard herself was often sad and preoccupied, and he was grieved to see that day by day the health of this good lady declined; he foresaw for his Pauline a thousand dangers, a thousand embarrassments, if she who was a mother to

her should die. In vain he pressed his sweetheart to confide her grief and uneasiness to him. Pauline still avoided the question, which seemed to augment her sorrow. One day when Henri came, according to his custom, he was affrighted at seeing the old domestic who opened the door to him, weeping bitterly.

"What has happened?" he exclaimed immediately.

"O monsieur, my good mistress is very ill, and has, I believe, only a few moments to live."

Henri immediately flew to the invalid's room. He found his dear Pauline bathed in tears beside Madame Reinstard's bed. The latter, although weak, and apparently on the brink of the grave, welcomed him with a sweet smile, and in a voice that was nearly extinct addressed to him these words, —

"I have waited impatiently, my dear Henri, to see you. It is to you that I leave my cherished daughter; I charge you to console her. I have read your heart, I have divined the feeling which you experience for her; Pauline returns that feeling. You must be married, and you must never leave her."

Henri pressed his Pauline in his arms, swearing nevermore to leave her. His sweetheart had not the strength to answer him, she was overwhelmed with sorrow. Madame Reinstard, making a great effort to overcome her weakness, continued, —

"You have been astonished, my dear Henri, at the mystery which appears to envelop all the actions of your sweetheart's father; you do not know that virtuous man. When you learn his misfortunes, you will cease to condemn his conduct. I have charged my Pauline to tell you everything, nothing must be hidden from you now, for it is in you alone that she should place all her hopes."

Here Madame Reinstard, enfeebled by the efforts she had made, experienced a faintness which indicated that she had but a few moments to live. Henri and Pauline surrounded her with their arms, she opened her eyes, took her pupil's hand, which she placed in that of Henri, and slept the eternal sleep.

Henri hastened to draw Pauline from the room, he took her in his arms, and carried her to another chamber. There he did not seek to appease her regret, but with her he wept for the estimable woman whom they had lost; it was the best consolation he could offer her. Some days later, when Pauline's grief had grown a little calmer, Henri ventured to ask her to tell him the facts to which Madame Reinstard had referred; Pauline consented and informed him as to the cause of her father's absence and of his frequent journeyings.

When Pauline had related her story, Henri, knowing that her uneasiness was caused by her father's long absence, resolved to start for Paris

in order to try and find him. He therefore departed, leaving Franck to watch over Pauline's safety, and bearing with him her most ardent wishes for the success of his journey.

We know that it was about this time that Colonel Framberg and Mullern arrived at Strasburg, hoping to find Henri there, but he had left for Paris, where they followed him. There our young man was not fortunate in his researches, he scoured the capital without discovering any traces of the one for whom he was looking. At last, weary of such a useless course, and urged by the desire to see Pauline, he started on his return to Strasburg, always pursued by the colonel and Mullern, who would infallibly have caught up with him had it not been for the accident in the forest.

Henri found his Pauline awaiting him with the utmost impatience; she ran to meet him as soon as she saw him.

"Well, my dear," said she, "what news?"

"None, my dearest."

"What about my father?"

"I could discover nothing in regard to him."

"How unfortunate I am! Something has happened to him, and I shall not see him again. I have nobody in the world to take pity on an unfortunate orphan."

"What do you say?" cried Henri, vehemently. "You have nobody in the world. Am I not your lover, your husband?"

"Oh, my dear Henri, I have been reflecting during your absence, and I think that I should not aspire to such happiness. I, an orphan, without name, without fortune, become the wife of the Count von Framberg! I see nothing but the distance which lies between us."

"Is it indeed you, whom I hear, Pauline! I can by one word prove to you that you are mistaken. Tell me if, by chance, Fate had made you richer than I would you have abandoned me for that?"

"My dear, that is very different."

"No, Pauline; I am not proud enough to prefer riches to virtue and beauty. Good Madame Reinstard blessed our vows, and you have no longer the right to oppose my happiness."

What could Pauline answer. She adored Henri, she ceased to resist his entreaties, and finally consented to become his wife.

As soon as Henri had obtained her consent, he busied himself in hastening the day of their marriage, for he ardently desired to present his Pauline to the colonel.

"As soon as my father sees you," he said to her, "he can only approve my choice."

"But if he should do otherwise, my dear. If he should try to break our bonds."

"No, Pauline, you do not know my father. He is brusque, but good, sensitive; besides, it is only necessary for him to see you to love you."

Pauline smiled, and began to hope.

Henri immediately made the preparations for his marriage; he sent Franck in search of a lawyer and a chaplain, and, while waiting, Henri obtained permission from Pauline to bring his effects from the hotel, and he occupied Madame Reinstard's apartment.

Franck punctually executed his master's orders, and one evening informed him that the lawyer would come the next morning, bringing the marriage contract.

"My faith, monsieur," said he, "I was so pleased at having executed my commission, that I went into a café and drank a bottle of beer to celebrate your approaching marriage." Henri kissed Franck, kissed the old servant, he would have kissed all the world in the extremity of his delight. Pauline took part in his joy and they separated, dreaming already of tomorrow. Poor fellow, you deliver yourself up to slumber while forming a thousand chimeras for the future, and you do not reflect, like Franck, how strange destiny is, and that at the moment when we least expect it she strikes the rudest blow.

CHAPTER XI

Who Would Have Suspected It

Henri awoke at daybreak; a great happiness has the same effect as a great sorrow, it forbids one to sleep, and induces one to get up early in the morning; however, as his Pauline still slept, or at any rate was not yet down, he went into the garden to await her appearance. How impatiently did he count the minutes, the seconds! Never had they seemed so slow as on this occasion when, as it seemed to him, Time should have lent itself wings and doubled its speed to gratify his desires. Finally, Pauline, who probably had slept no better than he, came to invite him to go up to breakfast while awaiting the lawyer's arrival. Henri followed her, and seated himself beside her; together they formed their plans for the future; he already gave her the sweet name of wife. Somebody knocked softly at the door.

"It is he, it's the lawyer," cried Henri; "Franck, go and open the door to him."

Franck ran. Henri heard him coming up; his heart beat with joy. The door opened; he looked, and was stunned by surprise at seeing Mullern enter the room.

"So I've found you at last, monsieur," said Mullern, paying no attention to Pauline. "Thousand bombs! you've made us run after you."

"What! Is it you, Mullern?" answered Henri, trying to pull himself together.

"Yes, monsieur, it's me. Oh, you didn't expect me, I'm sure."

"Who is this man, my dear?" said Pauline to Henri, taking him apart.

"He's an honest soldier, who is much attached to me."

"So," said Mullern, turning and perceiving Pauline, "this is she then. My word, she is pretty, I agree with him."

Pauline blushed to her eyes, and Henri, who greatly desired to terminate the interview, begged her to go to her room for a moment, and leave him alone with Mullern. Pauline departed, greatly surprised at the manner of the newcomer.

"Now that we are alone, monsieur," said Mullern to Henri, "I hope you are going to explain your strange conduct to me."

"First of all, how is my father?"

"Very well, very well, if he had not barely missed killing himself in running after you."

"What do you mean?"

"But that has nothing do with the question; tell me, monsieur, what are you doing in this house? Who is this woman whom I found with you just now?"

"That woman? She is my wife."

"Your wife?"

"Yes, or at least very nearly — for she will be in a few moments."

"Good, I see you're not married yet."

"Do you intend to put any obstacles in the way, Mullern?"

"It is possible, monsieur."

"I warn you then, that your proceedings will be useless; for nothing in the world can separate us."

"This is fine conduct, monsieur; tell me, should one marry at your age without deigning to consult his parents?"

"But tell me, don't you think my Pauline charming yourself?"

"Oh, as to that, she's pretty enough; I agree with you as to that. But there are pretty women who are not any the better for that."

"Take care, Mullern, how you outrage the woman I love! She is as virtuous as she is beautiful!"

"Well, even if she is virtuous, which is doubtful, but not impossible, is that a reason why you should marry the first who comes along? — a woman of whose birth you are ignorant."

"You are mistaken, Mullern, I do know, she has told me all about it. I know her father, his misfortunes —"

"Bless my soul! Idle stories, all of them!"

"No, Mullern, my Pauline is incapable of lying, she has told me the truth."

"Well, let's hear this marvellous story."

"I'll tell you all she said to me. Pauline's father is French."

"French! The name of Christiern is not his own, then?"

"No, my friend, it is a fictitious name which his circumstances compelled him to take."

"Well, and what is his real name?"

"D'Ormeville."

"D'Ormeville!" cried Mullern, struck with astonishment.

"What is the matter with you?" said Henri to him.

"It is nothing; go on; I am listening to you."

Henri resumed; "You must know, then, that Pauline's father entered the army and at the age of twenty he quarrelled with another officer of his regiment; they fought a duel, and he, unhappily, killed his enemy. This was the primary cause of his misfortunes. The family of his adversary was rich and powerful. D'Ormeville was obliged to leave his country to escape an arrest which would have resulted in his losing his life. He came to Germany with the intention of taking service there. After stopping some time in the domains of the Baron von Frobourg—"

"Of the Baron von Frobourg?"

"Yes, my friend, he has, they tell me, seen my mother."

"Ah, indeed?"

"He went to Vienna and entered the emperor's service. The army was about to take part in a campaign against the Russians, but in the first engagement D'Ormeville received a severe wound from a bullet and was left for dead on the field of battle. However, a man more humane than the others perceived that he still breathed. This man was a poor peasant whom chance had led to the place where they fought. He raised D'Ormeville and carried him to his cottage, where he recalled him to life. D'Ormeville remained for more than a year in the house of this good man, for it was not until that time that his wounds were entirely healed, and his health permitted him to rejoin the corps in which he had served; but during his long illness the fortunes of war had been unfavorable to the Austrians, and at the time that he wished to rejoin the army the Russians were masters of the little village in which he had hidden. He dared not venture to leave, fearing that he would be recognized as an enemy and put to death by the Russians, who made no prisoners. D'Ormeville decided to await more favorable circumstances; he disguised himself as a simple villager and was obliged to work in the fields in order to sustain his sad existence.

"It was at this epoch that he made the acquaint-

ance of my dear Pauline's mother. D'Ormeville did not tell his daughter who she was, nor how he had come to know her. All that he said to her was that her mother died in giving birth to her. D'Ormeville brought up his daughter, awaiting with impatience the moment when he might return to Austria. The time became more favorable, the Russians were beaten, and D'Ormeville rejoined the army. His daughter was the object of all his solicitude, and he did not know to whom to confide this precious charge, when chance introduced him to Madame Reinstard. This good lady had lost her son in the army and was overcome with grief. D'Ormeville proposed to her that she should take the place of a mother to his little Pauline, who was then four years old. Madame Reinstard joyfully consented, and, as the theatre of the war constantly recalled the loss she had sustained, she left with the child to go and dwell in a little house which she owned near Offenburg, where D'Ormeville promised to rejoin her as soon as his duty would permit.

"It was there, my dear Mullern, in that pretty house, where I took you one day, that my Pauline passed her youth under the eyes of Madame Reinstard, who loved her as her daughter. D'Ormeville came there, from time to time, to pass with her the leisure which his occupation allowed him. His valor had raised him to the rank of captain; he was not ambitious and desired nothing more.

You know, my dear Mullern, the manner in which I made Pauline's acquaintance."

"Yes, yes, I know it, and I wish that the devil had stifled me the day I allowed you to go out by yourself, but go on."

"Well, my friend, about this time, D'Ormeville, tormented by a desire to see his country again, had formed the plan of going to France. Pauline would not leave her father, and Madame Reinstard consented to accompany them. They all three started for Strasburg, and on arriving here took up their abode in the house where we now are. They lived here peacefully for about eighteen months, but at the end of that time D'Ormeville, wishing to resume his true name, that he might draw his Pauline from the solitude in which they had lived, decided to go to Paris, hoping to get the unjust sentence, which had condemned him to death, annulled. But during his absence my good star —"

"Say, rather, your evil star."

"Allowed me to discover my Pauline. Our separation had only augmented our love —"

"It had done a fine thing there."

"The good Madame Reinstard blessed our union —"

"These old women are always doing something foolish."

"And we gave ourselves up without reserve to the feeling which led us toward one another.

However, Heaven deprived Pauline of the good dame who had stood in the place of a mother to her; for a long time she had received no news of her father, and was in the greatest uncertainty as to his fate. I have been to Paris in the hope of finding him, but I have unsuccessfully made all possible research, and, since destiny has deprived her of her last support, it is for me, my dear Mullern, to serve her as such. I am about to become her husband; Pauline has pledged her faith to me, she has received my vows, and I cannot believe that my father, so good, so sensitive as he is, can blame the choice that I have made."

Mullern remained for some time absorbed in his reflections. Henri, astonished at his long silence, was about to demand the cause of it, when Mullern said to him, —

"I am sorry, my dear Henri, that I am about to afflict you, but there is no way of avoiding it; you must give up this marriage."

"What are you saying, Mullern? Renounce this marriage?"

"Yes, I tell you, and go with me at once, far from this house."

"And do you believe Mullern, that I am going to obey you?"

"I hope so."

"Well, undeceive yourself. This is no passing flame; it is a true passion which unites me to my Pauline, and no power on earth can separate us."

"Come," said Mullern to himself, "I see that much as I dislike the task, I must tell him all."

He approached Henri, and took him by the hand.

"My dear Henri, I see that the time has come for me to unveil a mystery which I would fain have hidden from you forever. Pauline is your sister."

"Great God! can it be? But, no, you are mistaken, Mullern, you wish me to deceive myself."

"No, my dear Henri, I am telling you the truth. She whom you love is your sister, for Colonel Framberg is not your father. It is to D'Ormeville that you owe your birth."

Henri fell on a chair prostrated, and Mullern related in detail all that he knew as to his birth, and the noble and generous conduct of Colonel Framberg. Henri listened silently; a mute sorrow, a profound depression had succeeded his violent grief. Mullern suffered almost as much as he on seeing his state.

"Be a man, my dear Henri; do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed by your sorrow, show sentiments more worthy of those who have brought you up. Tears are of no use in such circumstances as these; it is firmness and decision which are necessary. But first, you must follow me, and leave this place."

"Follow you, Mullern, but tell me what will become of her?"

"Be easy, I know what I have to do. Do you think, besides, that Colonel Framberg, after fulfilling towards you the duties of a father for nineteen years would leave your sister alone and unprotected? No, monsieur, render him more justice than that; he loves you too much not to love her also."

"Ah, Mullern, you reanimate my courage; but who is to tell my dear Pauline of the bonds which unite us?"

"Who? Why, hang it, it will have to be me, and I will do it directly, for the longer one defers this sort of a disclosure the more it envenoms the wound. But first of all, monsieur, you must leave the house."

"Without seeing her?"

"Yes, monsieur, without seeing her. Hang it, how would it help you to see her; it would only augment your despair, and it is not worth the trouble."

"And where shall I go, Mullern?"

"No matter where; you will be better anywhere than here; besides, I will go with you; I cannot leave you alone in this state. Afterwards, I shall return here by myself and, thousand thunders! I hope that in two hours everything will be arranged."

Mullern drew Henri, rather than led him, from the house. Henri raised his eyes on the dwelling which held the one who was dearest to him in

the world, and felt his heart break at each step which took him farther from his darling. The good hussar led him to Jeanneton's aunt, and recommended him to the good woman's care, but Henri was not in a state to perceive what was passing around him. Then Mullern returned to Pauline's dwelling, forcing himself to stifle in the depths of his heart the feeling which agitated him.

Pauline awaited with anxiety Henri's return, for she believed him to be still in the house with Mullern. A secret presentiment seemed to warn her of that which was passing, and when she saw Mullern come alone into her room she felt her knees give way, and a mortal pallor overspread her face. Mullern slowly came forward, not knowing how to tell her of her lover's departure.

"I come," said he, "to bring you Henri's adieux."

"What are you saying, monsieur, is he gone?"

"Yes, mademoiselle."

"For long?"

"I believe so."

"And without seeing me?"

"It was necessary that he should do so."

"Great God! Then he no longer loves me," and Pauline fell unconscious into Mullern's arms. The good hussar placed her gently on a sofa; when she returned to consciousness her tears flowed freely, and she cried with a feeling of the most vivid grief,—

"He no longer loves me!"

"And if, hang it, he does love you, mademoiselle, that is exactly why I have been obliged to part you."

"What, monsieur, it is you who are doing this?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, you will detest me for it, will you not? Well, you will be wrong; I have done nothing but my duty, it was necessary to break your engagement."

"Why so, monsieur?"

"Because, mademoiselle, it is not the custom for a brother to marry his sister."

"What are you saying, a brother?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, Henri is not Colonel Framberg's son, as he believed up to this moment, but instead the son of Captain D'Ormeville."

Mullern repeated to Pauline what he had told Henri. Pauline listened in silence, only interrupting his recital with sobs. When he had finished, he strode about the room, swearing between his teeth and wiping his tears. The sight of Pauline's sorrow penetrated his heart.

"Thousand bombs!" said he, "If I were the Pope, how quickly I would give them a dispensation to marry. But I am not, nor is my colonel either; so hang it, a truce to my tears! I mustn't have a heart like a baked apple, but try and arrange things as well as possible."

"Mademoiselle," said he, approaching Pauline,

"it is necessary that you should resign yourself; I know very well it isn't easy, but where would be the merit of conquering our passions if it cost us nothing?"

"But, monsieur, shall I see him no more?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, you will see him again, but not until time shall have calmed in your hearts a passion which would be criminal, and when friendship shall have replaced a hopeless love."

"You are right, monsieur; we must part. But, alas, what will become of me without him? I have no longer friends, protectors."

"You are mistaken, mademoiselle, you have one who will stand in the place of both."

"Who can that be, monsieur?"

"He who brought up your brother, and who loves him as a son. Do you think, mademoiselle, that Colonel Framberg will abandon you?"

"I have never besought help from anyone, monsieur."

"Your pride is very much misplaced, mademoiselle, and you are going to start at once for Castle von Framberg."

"I, monsieur?"

"Yes, you, mademoiselle."

"And what right have I to do so?"

"You have forgotten already then, that you will go as Henri's sister. Do you think, mademoiselle, we shall leave you alone in the world while your brother enjoys titles and wealth which

he should share with you. No, it is decided that you go to the château; besides, that will render your brother easy about you."

"But, monsieur—"

"What, mademoiselle?"

"If Colonel Framberg should not like me?"

"Oh, he will like you, I am sure."

"Ah, but if I should not—"

"Oh, I understand, if you should not like him, you mean,—the devil! you will be very hard to please if you don't. A man who has won honor in twenty campaigns, a man whose name alone makes the enemy tremble, a man who has brought up, adopted, cherished your brother as his own son—"

"Oh, I shall love him, monsieur."

"Yes, by George you'll love him, and everything will turn out well, I'll answer for it."

When Mullern had taken a resolution he was prompt in putting it into execution. He therefore urged Pauline to immediately make a package of what was necessary to her, and to hold herself ready to start within an hour.

"But, monsieur," said Pauline to him, "how about my old servant?"

"You will take her with you, mademoiselle."

"But, monsieur, I do not know the way to the castle."

"Hang it, mademoiselle, do you take me for a child? Did you think that I was going to send

you there alone? Franck will conduct you thither."

"Franck, my brother's servant?"

"Yes, your brother's servant. Thus you perceive all obstacles are overcome. I'll go and see about the post-chaise, and this evening you will be far from Strasburg."

"And very far from Henri," thought Pauline as she saw Mullern depart. However, she saw a secret charm in going to live in the place where he whom she loved had been brought up. The Castle von Framberg would have seemed a delightful abode had she been there with him.

On leaving Pauline, Mullern sought Franck and apprised him of what he had to do. Franck, who felt before Mullern like a scholar before his master, promised him that he would faithfully fulfil his directions. Mullern, having ordered a post-chaise, thought that it was time to write to his colonel, and to inform him of all the events that had come to pass, up to the present the shortness of time had not allowed him to do so. He therefore took a pen and wrote the following letter,—

My Colonel: I have at last discovered our young man, and I flatter myself that it was not without some trouble. But it was time that I did so. Thousand bombs! An hour later and I should not have been in time, and the little one would have — but I got there, my Colonel, and I have arranged everything in the best way in the world. Henri knows everything, my Colonel, everything; it was very necessary to tell him, for the little one was his sister; and if I had not told him all, my

Colonel, a regiment of hussars would not have been able to separate them. I am sending the little one to the castle, and I am going to send Henri to you. They are both in despair, and weep in a manner that would soften a bullet of forty-eight. You see, my Colonel, that everything is going well, and I hope you will approve the course I have taken. I am, my Colonel, your faithful soldier and servant, MULLERN.

Mullern, having sealed this short and energetic epistle sent it to Colonel Framberg, recommending his messenger to make all due speed and to advise the colonel that he would arrive shortly. This business settled, he returned to Pauline in order that he might hasten her departure. Pauline, with oppressed heart, awaited the moment when Mullern should separate her from him whom she held most dear; but our hussar had gained such an ascendancy over her that as soon as she saw him she rose and silently prepared to depart. Mullern led her to the post-chaise, with her old servant, and tightly pressed her hand.

"Take courage," he said to her, "when one exhibits resignation under misfortune, one receives a recompense for it sooner or later"; then, turning towards Franck, he ordered him to lash his horses, and the post-chaise rapidly rolled away.

CHAPTER XII

A Novel Reader Will Have Already Divined It. Another Joyful Moment

"Oh," said the stout old hussar to himself, as he stood watching the post-chaise which was carrying away the unhappy Pauline, in charge of Franck and accompanied by her old servant, "if it were necessary often to conduct similar campaigns to this one, I should greatly prefer to withstand a volley from the muskets of my regiment. I hope, however, that I shall win out of this affair with honor; the worst is done once for all. I had supposed that Henri's grief and disappointment were what would cause me the most pain, and the poor fellow suffered, I must confess it; but hang it all! I know now, if I did not know it before, that a woman's tears more easily reach and vanquish the heart. I had no idea that I was so sensitive to them."

While making these reflections on his morning's work, as hard a one as he ever wished to undertake, Mullern mechanically took the road which led him to the house of Jeanneton's aunt. He entered and met the good-natured girl on the stairs and stopped her.

"Well, Jeanneton, how is my young man?"

"He is still in the same state as when you brought him."

"Oh, that rascal Love!"

"Tell me, then, Mullern, why is he so disconsolate?"

"Why, for a woman."

"Doesn't she love him? she must be difficult to please."

"Does she like him, hang it — but they cannot marry."

"I am sorry for the young man's disappointment, he appears so sensitive."

"It is I who formed him, he is my pupil."

"I compliment you on him."

Mullern hastened to go to Henri. The young man appeared absorbed in his grief, but as soon as he perceived Mullern, he arose and threw himself into his arms, and burst into a torrent of tears.

"What a child you are," said the latter to him, "Come, hang it, face the storm."

"Where is she, Mullern, come, tell me, what have you done with her?"

"She has gone, monsieur, and she has shown courage beyond that of her sex. Imitate her, my dear Henri, don't let a woman excel you in pluck. Remember the grief that you will cause to him who has served as a father to you if you give way to a useless sorrow. I don't say anything to you

about the old hussar, who educated your infancy, who loves you as his son, and whom your despair will lead to the grave. Alas, your unhappy passion stifles all other feelings in your heart, for since we have been united after so long a separation you have not even pressed my hand, you have not deigned to address to me the slightest word of friendship."

Mullern could not restrain his tears as he said these words. Henri perceived them, threw himself upon his neck, kissed him and begged him to forgive him, promising him to be more reasonable. Mullern asked nothing further of him, and peace was soon made.

"Come, my dear Henri, let us seek the colonel, I am sure that he is awaiting us impatiently."

"But why, Mullern, did he not come to Strasburg with you?"

"Because an awkward postilion upset us in the forest, about six leagues from here, and the colonel was unfortunately wounded in the leg."

"And where is he now?"

"In a little isolated house in the midst of the forest with a man whose face did not please me at all. But we were obliged to go somewhere."

Henri recalled the adventure which he had had in the same forest, and related it to Mullern.

"Oh, if I had been there," said the latter, "the other rascal would not have escaped; but you acted bravely, and I am content."

Mullern and Henri being ready to start, left Madame Tapin's house. Mullern had also to dry Jeanneton's tears, but he slipped a double louis into her hand and promised to return to see her as soon as his business would allow him to do so.

Colonel Framberg, whom he had left for such a long time in Monterranville's house, was nearly healed of his wound, and was getting ready to go to Strasburg to rejoin Mullern, when he received the letter of which the reader already knows. One may easily conceive his surprise and uneasiness on learning events which appeared to him incomprehensible, but Mullern's style was so involved that he did not know quite what was meant, and awaited with the greatest agitation the arrival of those who could put an end to his uncertainty.

Mullern and Henri reached M. de Monterranville's house the same evening. Carll opened the door to them, and Mullern struck him amicably on the shoulder, and asked him whether his master, M. de Monterranville, was with the colonel.

"Not at this moment," responded Carll, "my master has gone out."

"All the better," said Mullern to Henri. "Let us profit by that circumstance."

They went rapidly up the stairs and found the colonel pacing his room in a disquieted frame of mind. As soon as he saw Henri he opened his arms, and Henri threw himself into them.

"I will not reproach you, my dear son," he said, kissing him. "Although your heedless conduct and the little confidence you have shown in me give me the right to do so. But you are unhappy, according to what Mullern tells me, and I will not increase your suffering."

"And I, Colonel," said Mullern, advancing to him, "do you blame the course I have taken."

"No, my friend, although the letter you wrote gives me little information as to what has passed, but I hope you will now give me the amplest details."

In order to satisfy the colonel's curiosity, Henri succinctly related to him all that had happened since his departure from the castle, as well as the history of his dear Pauline, and the manner in which he had learned that he was not the colonel's son.

"Chance has rendered you aware of the secret which I should have hidden from you all my life," said the colonel. "You may rest assured that I shall never cease to take your father's place. As to your sister, she becomes my daughter, from this moment I adopt her; she shall never leave me again. When time has effaced from her heart and yours a passion which would never have existed had you been aware of the ties which united you, you shall share our happiness, and increase it still more by your presence. But just at present it is necessary that we should separate anew,

my son, in order that you may not approach her from whom you must fly. You must go still farther from Castle von Framberg, but this time Mullern shall accompany you. It is to him alone that I will confide the one so dear to me. During your absence, I shall endeavor to dry the tears of a daughter whom I already love, and that will console me for this new separation."

Henri kissed the colonel a thousand times, and expressed all the gratitude with which this noble and generous conduct inspired him. Mullern highly approved the colonel's arrangements, and the plan which he had formed was thus welcome to every one.

As the night was advanced, and the colonel, fatigued by the various sensations which he had experienced, had need of repose, they separated, with the understanding that the next morning they should all leave the house in the woods. As the colonel's room held only one bed, Mullern invited Henri to pass the night in his own. The latter consented to it, and having embraced the colonel, they left him to rest. In traversing a long passage which led to the staircase, they saw in the distance a man who was about to pass them with a light in his hand.

"That's M. de Monterranville," said Mullern to Henri; "let's pass him, I don't like that man."

But Henri thought that politeness would not allow him to spend the night in the house of a

man whom he had not saluted, and besides, he owed him thanks for the generous hospitality which he had accorded the colonel. Henri, therefore, advanced toward him, and Mullern followed reluctantly, fuming against the customs of society. M. de Monterranville stopped on seeing Henri, the latter greeted him, and was about to address to him the thanks which were his due, when raising his eyes he recognized in the gentleman before him one of the two murderers of the forest. Henri's speech froze, a sudden pallor overspread his face, he could scarcely articulate some confused words, and he led away Mullern, who did not understand the cause of this violent agitation. As to M. de Monterranville, he had not recognized Henri, because he had fled from the scene in the wood at the first sound of firearms, but as scoundrels always believe themselves to be betrayed, this one, much astonished at the uneasiness which the young man exhibited at his approach, resolved to know the cause of it in order that he might guard himself against all events. When Henri got into Mullern's room he paused to breathe more freely, then, taking the latter's hand, —

" Let us leave, my friend," said he, " let us go and awaken my father, I cannot spend the night in this house."

" Why, what's to do, hang it, tell me what all this means. What does this trouble, this terror mean ? "

"Ah, Mullern, this terror is very natural."

"Are you afraid of something?"

"I fear nothing for myself, but I tremble with horror in thinking that I am under a murderer's roof."

"Under a murderer's roof?"

"Yes, Mullern. I have recognized in this M. de Monterranville one of the two men of the forest."

"Can it be? A thousand bombs! What, this rascal is —"

"One of those who tried to kill the stranger whom I saved from their hands."

"Triple cannonade!" cried Mullern, putting his hand on the handle of his sabre, "let's call on this rascal, let us punish him for his crime."

Saying these words, Mullern was about to leave the room, in order to execute his design, but Henri seized him by the arm.

"Stop, Mullern, what are you going to do?"

"Why, hang it, relieve the earth of a scoundrel, he has remained on it long enough."

"Remember, we can furnish no proof of his crime, and that we should be punished ourselves for having taken justice into our own hands."

"Hang it, you are right, but what shall we do then?"

"Listen. Now that I have reflected, I think it will be imprudent to make a disturbance that will lead to nothing, and my father will regulate

our conduct. We have nothing to fear from this man, for he could not have recognized me, and it is not us whom he wishes to harm."

"Come, hang it, since it is necessary, I will yield to your opinion, but I confess that I hardly like to do so, for I should have had much pleasure in polishing my sabre on this brigand's body."

This resolution taken, Mullern and Henri threw themselves, all dressed, on their beds, but they did not sleep for a moment. The thought that they were under the roof of a murderer revolted their frank and loyal souls.

The next day, as soon as it was light, they thought that they could go and awaken the colonel without raising any suspicion; but their precautions were needless, for Monterranville knew all. We must remember that Henri's emotion had alarmed him, and as soon as Mullern and his companion had shut themselves up in their chamber, he had gone into a room that adjoined theirs, opened a closet, and placing himself against its wall, had heard perfectly all of their conversation.

One may judge of his terror on learning that he was recognized, but their last words reassured him a little. Finding that they would wait until the next morning to decide what they would do, he thought it would be prudent not to await their decision, and promptly left the house in the middle of the night.

Colonel Framberg opened the door to his com-

panions, astonished at being awakened so early in the morning, and still more so on seeing with what precaution Mullern reclosed the door of his chamber, and the air of mystery which was expressed in their countenances. Horror and indignation succeeded his surprise, when he learned with whom he had been staying for so long a time. However, he ordered Mullern and Henri to restrain themselves, and to do nothing.

"What, my Colonel?" said Mullern, "you mean that we are not to confound this scoundrel."

"No, Mullern, our duty is opposed to it. Reflect that for nearly a month I have received hospitality in this house, the master is a monster, but it is not for me to arm justice against him; besides, you may be easy, Mullern, for, believe me, if he escapes for an instant the punishment which is his due, it is only that he may fall later under the arm of the law."

"Since you wish it, Colonel, I obey."

"It must be so for under any other circumstances I should have been the first, my friends, to advise you to cleanse the earth of this scoundrel, but we will remain no longer in this haunt of crime. I long to go and breathe an air which has not been soiled by the breath of a brigand."

Saying these words, the colonel left his chamber, Henri and Mullern following him. They found Carll in the courtyard, and learned from him that his master had gone before daybreak.

"He has done well," said Mullern, between his teeth, "for, hang it! had I seen him, I could not have mastered my indignation."

The colonel mounted his horse, Henri and Mullern followed his example, and they pressed their animals that they might depart more rapidly from this house which inspired them with so much horror.

Our three travellers arrived at Strasburg, and alighted at the best inn, that they might rest for a short time before separating.

"My dear Henri," said Colonel Framberg to our hero, when they were alone, "I have no orders to give you concerning your future conduct, and I leave entirely in Mullern's hands the charge of caring for your happiness. If, perchance, you feel desirous of entering a military career in the hope of finding distraction more readily, I will not constrain your desires, but, on the contrary, will do everything possible to facilitate them. However, I beg of you, whatever you decide upon, let me know of it in advance."

Henri promised the colonel to do nothing without consulting him. The secret grief which he hid in the depths of his soul, and which he forced himself to hide from his friends, rendered him incapable of forming any plans as to his conduct or as to the future. One object alone occupied his thoughts, despite all the efforts which he was making to banish it.

As to Mullern, he ardently desired that his dear pupil should enter the army.

"Why," said he, to Henri, "after twenty years of peace I should yet see joyfully a field of battle, and the old companions of my glory."

Henri did not answer, but Mullern hoped that the military scenes which he should frequently recount to him would awaken his desire, and that he would at length yield to his wishes. In this hope he invited Henri to take the route to Vienna, and the latter consented.

Colonel Framberg said good-by to Henri. The latter asked him why he did not accompany them to Offenburg, but the colonel excused himself under the pretext that some business still kept him in France. This, in truth, was not his motive. He did not wish to impart to Henri a plan which he had conceived, for fear that he should be unsuccessful in his enterprise. However, he confided his design to Mullern, and ordered him to maintain the most profound secrecy in regard to it. The latter promised him, lost in admiration of the colonel's conduct.

Henri, having embraced the colonel, and expressed the desire of seeing him again soon, followed by Mullern, again took the road for Germany.

We will leave Colonel Framberg preparing to repair to Paris to accomplish his noble plan, and will put ourselves en route with our two travellers

that we may see what method Mullern took to cure Henri of the grief which consumed him. Our hussar and his pupil were travelling on horseback.

"It is the best method of finding distraction," said Mullern to Henri. "Wait, monsieur, glance around you on this superb view which spreads before our eyes, see the vast solitudes of the Black Forest which extend so far on the side of Freudenstadt, on the other side the pretty town of Offenburg, which we leave behind us to bury ourselves in this verdurous prairie; the birds singing the return of springtime, the ploughmen returning from their rustic labors. In truth, monsieur, all this elevates the soul, and gives me an eloquence of which I had not deemed myself capable."

Henri smiled as he listened to Mullern, and the latter, charmed at having drawn him for an instant from his sad reflections, continued his discourse upon the beauties of Nature. While listening to Mullern's descriptions, Henri perceived that without paying any attention to it they had taken the way to the Castle von Framberg. He carefully refrained from remarking upon it to his companion, but the latter was not long in perceiving it for himself.

"Oh," said he, suddenly stopping his horse, "I see that with my fine discourse I have led you where it was quite unnecessary for us to go. Come, hang it, let us retrace our way."

"Why should we do that, my dear Mullern."

"Because, monsieur, it was not my intention to take you to the colonel's castle."

"Oh, Mullern, I should have a great deal of pleasure in seeing it again."

"That's possible, monsieur; you will, however, see it later on, but now it cannot be."

"And you say that you wish to distract me from my grief, Mullern? Do you think that there could be a more agreeable distraction for me than the pleasure I should experience in visiting the dear place where I passed my infancy, the place where I received from you all those lessons which taught me to be a man, the place which I have not seen for more than two years."

Mullern, softened by Henri's speech, did not know how to refuse him that which he asked with so much insistence.

"But hang it! monsieur," he said at length, assuming a severe tone to impose on Henri, "don't you know that your sister is now in this castle, and that you would be very foolish to try to see her?"

"And did you think, Mullern, that such was my design. No, I wish only to approach the castle, to visit the neighborhood, and see the park and the gardens where I found my earliest pleasures, and depart to return here in happier days."

"But you might meet your sister."

"No, my friend; is it likely that chance will

lead her exactly where I am? I shall avoid such a meeting; besides, you shall not leave me."

"Come, since you wish it, I consent to that. But, hang it! at the first approach of a woman, remember that I shall insist on your galloping off as fast as you can go."

"I will do all that you wish."

"I am, in truth, too complaisant, but it is already dark. You will understand, monsieur, that it is not the moment for visiting the park and gardens, since we are still two leagues distant from the castle."

"Well, then, Mullern, let's pass the night in the neighborhood — in that farm that you see down there; certainly, no one can refuse us a night's rest, and tomorrow morning, as soon as day breaks, we can take our way to the castle."

"So be it," said Mullern, "let us sleep at the farm."

Our travellers approached the farm, and Mullern thought he recognized the house where, when seeking his pupil, such a comical adventure had befallen him; he resolved to assure himself if his conjectures were well founded.

Night was falling, the door of the court was still open; Mullern entered first. Each object which met his eyes confirmed his suspicions. Presently he came upon the farmer occupied in the stable, but he left his work as soon as he saw them and came to meet them, bowing very respectfully.

"What do these gentlemen wish?"

"To sleep here, if that be possible," said Henri to the farmer.

"You see before you," said Mullern, advancing, "the son of the Count von Framberg, lord of the castle which lies two leagues from here, and Sergeant-major Mullern, formerly in the emperor's hussars and now the count's governor."

The farmer opened his eyes wide on hearing all these titles, although he did not understand much about them, and called lustily for his servants, that they might prepare everything for these gentlemen.

"Hallo there, Grosjean! Pierre! — come along, then, you fellows!" Grosjean immediately came down.

"Where is Pierre, I wonder?" said the farmer to the latter.

"Mercy, master, I don't know! Perhaps he's helping the mistress."

Mullern recalled the fact that Pierre had been on very friendly terms with the farmer's wife, and presumed from Grosjean's speech that they still held to their ancient usages.

However, the farmer's shouts brought Dame Catherine and Pierre, who came by different ways, both as red as lobsters.

"Come, wife, bestir yourself and try to get some supper for these gentlemen, while Pierre makes their beds."

The farmer's wife, who was alert, had soon served supper. Mullern examined her with some curiosity, for on the occasion of his previous visit to the farm, he had only seen her, or rather had not seen her, in the dark, and he now discovered with pleasure that the dame had her merits, and that though she was by no means as young as Jeanneton, she was still sufficiently attractive.

Catherine had led the travellers into a room on the groundfloor, and while preparing their supper she was quick to notice Mullern's glances, although she did not allow it to appear. An old soldier of fifty has not very much in common with a bachelor of twenty, but when one has a young lover near one every day, one may take pleasure in flirting with a hussar, without prejudice to the former.

Henri, who lived only in the hope of the morrow, ate little and retired to his room in order to get some sleep; but Mullern, who greatly desired to see what would develop, remained at the table and invited the farmer to drink a cup with him and chat for a while.

Mullern, as they say, drank hard. The farmer wished to keep him in countenance, and the conversation soon became heated.

"Do you know, Monsieur le Hussar, that the title you have given of sergeant-major of the Count von Framberg recalls to me an event which happened nearly three years ago — say, don't you

remember, wife, that rascal, who wished also to pass for a hussar?"

"Yes, yes, I remember," said the farmer's wife, smiling.

"What was this adventure?" asked Mullern of the farmer.

"Why, hang it, I was just going to tell you — it was well into the middle of the night when a robber came knocking at our door. My wife had gone to bed, my men were asleep. No one was up but me, and I was casting my accounts in this room. I went to ask who knocked. Well, then, he had the effrontery to tell me that he was a sergeant-major, pupil of the Count von Framberg, in fact, he pretended to be what you are — that's all."

"What?" said the farmer's wife to her husband, "monsieur has the same names as the robber gave you?"

"Yes, Catherine, you may see by that how he lied, the scamp!"

The farmer's wife suspected how it was, and warned by a knock from Mullern's knee saw that she had rightly divined. The farmer seeing how much his history amused his guest embellished it with all possible details. Mullern was careful not to interrupt him, and contented himself with pouring drink for him every moment, and the farmer's wife, who foresaw where that led, reproached her husband with being more abstemious than usual,

"Yes, monsieur."

"But remember to be discreet with the other servants."

"Be easy, monsieur, I'll do as you wish."

The gardener ran to execute his commission, and Henri impatiently awaited Franck's arrival. He had so many things to ask of him, so many questions to put to him. His only fear was lest Mullern should come and upset all his plans; but at last he saw Franck come running, and flew to meet him.

"Oh, here you are, my poor Franck, how pleased I am to see you."

"I am pleased, too, monsieur; I confess that I didn't expect you; but destiny is so strange; so many things have passed since we saw each other last."

"You're right, Franck, and I am waiting for you to tell me all that has happened to you."

"Willingly, monsieur," said Franck, sighing.

Henri noticed this sigh; he perceived that Franck had a sad, constrained air.

"Great God!" cried he, "what have you to tell me Franck, has something happened to my Pauline — my sister?"

"Nothing has positively happened to her, monsieur, — however — "

"Well, then — "

"However, at this moment — "

"At this moment?"

"It is — she is — she is —"

"Speak at once, sirrah, you make me die with impatience."

"Mercy, monsieur, it's because I dare not tell you."

"Speak, hide nothing from me, I command you."

"Well, then, monsieur, Mademoiselle Pauline is very ill, and now they fear for her life."

"Good God!" cried Henri, with an accent of despair; "I must go to her."

"Wait, monsieur," said Franck, holding him by his coat, "unless you wish to kill her at once. The emotion caused by your unexpected presence would make her much worse."

"Oh, Franck, may I not see her then?"

"If possible, monsieur, you shall see her when she can bear your visit, and when I shall have warned her of your return."

"But tell me why I find her in this state."

"Willingly, monsieur, it will not take long. When we left Strasburg, Mademoiselle Pauline showed a firmness, a resignation which astonished me. I did not doubt that she suffered in the depths of her heart, but Mullern's presence and his words had given her a courage which could not last. Our journey was very sad, as you may imagine, and in vain I sought to distract her by speaking to her now and then, but she maintained the utmost silence; however, as we approached

the Castle von Framberg she appeared to be moved by a new feeling. She asked me if that was the place where you were born, if there were many people in the castle, and if the colonel was there? When she learned that he was not, she appeared more reassured and went into the castle calmly enough. I made them give her, according to Mullern's orders, one of the most agreeable apartments; I conducted her through the park and gardens, and showed her everything that was beautiful about the castle. She thanked me for what she called my politeness with the sweet smile that you remember, but all these attentions could not prevent her from falling ill on the day after her arrival. Since that day she has gone from worse to worse, and since yesterday she has been in the height of delirium."

"She is delirious. Great God!" cried Henri, "give me the strength to bear so much sorrow. But tell me, Franck, does she still speak of me?"

"I should think so, indeed. Sometimes she is calling you at the top of her voice, naming you by turn her husband and her brother; sometimes it is her father who is the object of her tears and her wishes; but more often it is you, monsieur, for whom she insistently asks, and in a manner so sad that it makes one ill to hear her."

Henri, overwhelmed by Franck's story, remained for some moments unable to utter a single word. Then he rose hastily from the bank

of grass on which he had been seated and ran with all his might toward the castle.

"In the name of heaven, stop," said Franck, running after him and holding by his coat.

"Let me go, Franck, let me go; I must see her, I will see her."

"Well, thousand thunders! you shall not see her," said a blunt voice, which caused Henri to turn his head; he perceived Mullern, who was barring his passage, and did not seem to be in a humor to yield it to him.

CHAPTER XIII

Love Is Not Always Productive of Good

Upon his awakening in the morning the honest farmer was not at all astonished at finding Mullern sleeping beside him; but when the latter individual opened his eyes and became fully aware that Henri had made a clandestine departure, and thus taken the wind out of his sails, he swore heartily at himself for allowing a woman, at his time of life, to entice him so foolishly to forget his duty. Then he forthwith prepared to follow his pupil.

"Mercy, what are you making such a fuss about?" said the farmer. "I am sure it is not very astonishing that both you and I slept so late this morning; we drank long and hard last night."

"That's true," answered Mullern, "and then your wine is of a kind that goes devilishly to the head."

The farmer's wife came down at this moment, and Mullern, fearing that she might tempt him to delay his departure, hastened to mount his horse. The hospitable farmer invited him with hearty kindness to come often to hobnob with

him, and the wife added her invitation to that of her husband.

Mullern reached the castle a short time after Henri, and he was about to search the grounds when he perceived him coming toward him. On hearing Henri's last words he was doubtful how to act, not knowing the cause of his despair.

"Where are you going, monsieur," said he to Henri, as he stopped.

"To the castle, Mullern."

"What are you going there for?"

"To see her."

"You told me you would not go."

"Oh, my friend, she is dying."

"Dying, that's a little strong — Is it true Franck?"

"Yes, Monsieur Mullern, it is the truth."

"I will go and assure myself of it; but it will be useless for you to follow me. If she is in the state you tell me you cannot recall her to life; on the contrary, if she is not so ill, the sight of you will renew her grief without solacing it."

"Ah, Mullern, let me come with you?"

"Monsieur, you forget that it is your sister who is concerned, and that your conduct is not such as it should be."

"Despite your remonstrances, I shall not leave the castle until I am sure of her fate."

"Humph," said Mullern to himself, "it is necessary to break this love, no matter what the

cost may be. Go and wait for me in the gardener's house at the end of the park," said he to Henri. "I will go to you there and will tell you all that you wish to know as soon as possible."

Henri dared not resist, and followed Franck, who led him to his father's cottage, situated at the other extremity of the gardens, at some distance from the castle. As to Mullern, he looked after Henri, repenting of the weakness he had shown in allowing him to come to the castle, and considering what means he could use to get him away. Henri awaited Mullern's return with an anxiety difficult to describe. However, the hours rolled by and the hussar did not come. Henri, as night approached, could not control his uneasiness, and sent Franck to the castle to learn the cause of the delay. Franck was just leaving when Henri saw someone coming towards him; despite the darkness, he recognized Mullern and flew to meet him. He was not mistaken, it was our hussar.

"Well, Mullern," said Henri, "what kept you so long at the castle? In heaven's name tell me what has passed."

"Nothing," answered Mullern, in a gloomy voice, continuing to walk towards the gardener's house."

"How did you leave Pauline?"

"She has nothing more to fear."

"What do you mean to say? Speak, your silence chills me with terror."

"You wish me to tell you — why, then, arm yourself with courage, your sister, — your sister is no more."

Henri heard no further, he fell unconscious.

"Come, the crisis is strong," said Mullern, "but it will not last long," and he gave all his attention to bringing Henri to his senses. Aided by the gardener, who came running at his cries, he carried him to the cottage and put him to bed. The young man only opened his eyes to fall again into a more alarming fit than the one he came out of. A high fever had seized him, and an alarming delirium deprived him of reason; he saw, he recognized nobody. Mullern, dismayed at Henri's state, thumped his head and tore his hair, and appeared to blame himself as the only cause of the illness which had overwhelmed his dear pupil. Our hero remained for five days in that state, and Mullern passed all his time near his bed. At last nature, stronger than illness, recalled Henri to existence, and on the sixth day he recovered his reason and with it a little more tranquillity.

"Well, the crisis is passed," said Mullern, seeing Henri calmer. "My faith, it has been severe, and if you had succumbed, there would have been nothing for me to do but to go and keep company with the frogs in the castle moat. But you are returning to health and I feel myself relieved of a bullet of thirty-six which has been pressing on my breast."

"My poor Mullern," said Henri, smiling, "how much trouble I give you."

"Recover your health, your courage above all, and I shall be paid for my trouble."

Henri promised all, and Mullern kissed him, weeping with joy. It was a fortnight before Henri could leave his bed, but Mullern never left his pupil. Henri sometimes asked why Franck never came to see him.

"I've told Franck to go and look for a good carriage for us to travel in when you are ready to start, and that is why you don't see him here; besides, are you not satisfied with my care that you ask for your servant?"

"You are unjust, Mullern, if I asked for Franck it is that you may take the repose of which you have so much need."

"Be easy, my rest is to see you return to health."

"My good Mullern."

When Henri was able to go out a little, Mullern took him into the country by a little door which was a few steps from the gardener's house.

"Why should we go out of the castle grounds," said Henri to Mullern.

"Because the sight of the country will distract you more than that of the park, which you have seen a hundred times."

"But, Mullern, I always review it with so much pleasure."

The Castle von Framberg.

ORIGINAL ETCHING BY CHARLES H. WHITE.

[illegible]," said Henri, smili[illegible]
[illegible]"
[illegible] your health, your courage ab[illegible]
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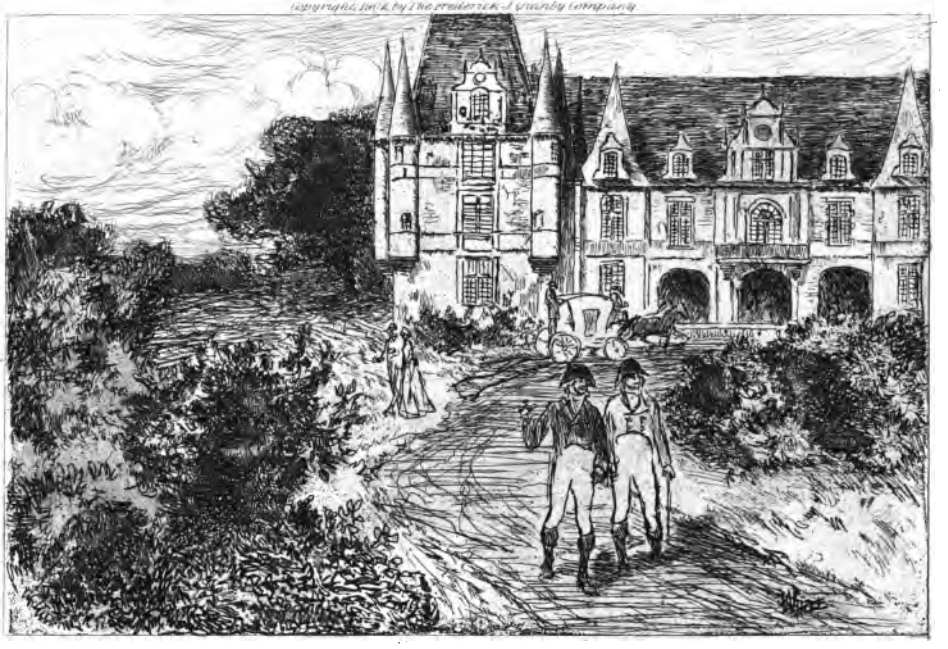
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"No, monsieur, you only pretend that, and you shall not go."

Henri dared not resist; however, he felt from the depths of his heart the most lively desire to see again those places which he was about to leave, perhaps for a very long time. When Mullern believed that Henri was strong enough to commence his journey, he told him that in two days they would leave the castle.

"Franck has returned, then," said he.

"Yes, and the post-chaise will wait for us before the little gate which is near here and which opens on the road."

"What! Are we not going to leave from the castle?"

"You see that it is needless."

Henri dared not reply, but he swore that he would not leave without visiting for the last time the home of his infancy. On the eve of the day fixed for their departure, Mullern was overcome with fatigue and begged Henri to go to bed early; Henri had made his plans, so he pretended to yield to Mullern's desire. Our hussar went to bed and was not long in going to sleep. When Henri was certain of this he rose cautiously, softly left the cottage and took the way to the castle.

The evening was superb, the light of a magnificent moon shed over the scene a bluish tint; and, in fixing his eye upon a clump of shrubbery, he thought he distinguished a motionless shadow,

a strange face. It is at such times as these that a thousand objects meet our sight, trouble our imagination, which are, however, only reflections produced by the queen of the night. Henri walked with trembling steps; his mind, enfeebled by his illness, begot a thousand fancies. Each object caused his heart to beat loudly; a secret presentiment seemed to warn him that something extraordinary was about to occur.

He came at last to that part of the park which was very near the castle; unable longer to master his agitation he entered a cluster of shrubbery to seat himself for a moment till he could regain his calm. But something struck his sight; on the bench before him he distinguished a white shadow which appeared motionless, and unconscious of his presence. Henri could not command his emotion, he was forced to support himself against a tree, but the shade arose, advanced slowly toward him, a ray of moonlight shone on her face, he recognized it.

"Shade of my Pauline!" cried he, falling on his knees before her, "have you left your celestial abode to come and visit him who cannot henceforth be happy on an earth where you do not dwell with him?"

"Henri," said a feeble voice, and Pauline, for it was she, fell unconscious before her lover.

"Great Heaven!" cried Henri, "is it an illusion, but no, it is indeed she, it is my Pauline.

Heaven, touched by my despair, has restored her to me, never to separate us again."

Henri hastened to assist his sweetheart. Pauline opened her eyes; she recognized Henri and smiled tenderly. She was in the arms of him from whom she believed she had separated forever. Henri, at the height of joy pressed her against his heart and covered her with kisses. They both forgot the natural ties which united them to dream of nothing but a love which misled them and allured them into an abysm of which they were unconscious until it was too late. Repentance usually follows close upon a fault, but in this case the fault was not one which a lover can cause to be forgotten by new caresses. Henri dared not raise his eyes to Pauline, who wept, and again became unconscious. Henri did not dream of succoring her whose misery he had caused; he rapidly fled from the fatal spot, buried himself in the park, reached the country, and disappeared from the castle.

Poor Pauline, who will come to dry your tears, calm your despair? He has left you who alone could lighten your sufferings; he has left you, swearing never to see you again; but Heaven will take pity upon your misfortunes, he will send you a friend, a consoler, when you are murmuring against Providence and against the rigor of your destiny.

First of all, we must explain to the reader how

Pauline, who was supposed to be dead, found herself with Henri in the shrubbery. We have seen how disturbed Mullern was because Henri would not leave the castle during his sister's illness. The good hussar saw very well that the young man still hid in the depths of his heart a passion which would make him unhappy for the rest of his life, and he resolved to extinguish it by violent means. On learning of the illness of Pauline the idea immediately came to him to make it appear that she was dead. He went to see the young invalid to assure himself first as to her condition. He found Pauline very ill, and thought that what he had imagined as a pretence would soon become a truth. However, he would not await the event, and the same evening, on returning to Henri, he put his plan into execution. Despite the grief which he knew awaited him when Henri should learn the worst, he had not believed that his stratagem would produce so violent an effect, and when he saw his dear pupil at the door of the tomb he repented of the means he had employed to cure him of his love. At last Henri recovered his health and Mullern began to breathe freely. During Henri's illness, Mullern had learned through Franck that Pauline was almost entirely well, but as the crisis had passed he would not tell Henri this news, and resolved to sustain him in an error which would render him content. This was why he was careful to send Franck

away from his master and to prevent Henri from walking in the castle grounds.

Mullern's plan had been well conceived, but destiny would not allow it to be put into execution. Pauline, who for some days had taken the air in the castle gardens, attracted by the beauty of the evening had seated herself in a clump of shrubbery, and while reflecting had forgotten that the hour for retiring had long since passed. We have seen the means which fate had taken to reunite the two lovers and to upset in one minute all our hussar's plans.

But Mullern could not always sleep, the remembrance of the journey which he was to undertake awakened him at daybreak. He rose, dressed himself, and ran to Henri's bed to learn if he had passed a good night. What was his astonishment, his uneasiness, on finding that he was not in the cottage.

"Come," said he, "my young man is playing some of his tricks. I must lose no time in getting after him." And already Mullern was in the park, which he searched on every side; at last chance led him to the fatal shrubbery; at a distance he believed he could distinguish something, and he saw Pauline extended unconscious on the ground. Our hussar did not amuse himself by making conjectures, "The devil's mixed himself up in it," said he; "they have seen each other, talked with each other, and the action has been

warm, or so it seems to me; but where is my pupil, then?" While waiting for an answer to this question, Mullern put Pauline on his shoulder and took the way to the château. Everybody was still sleeping, but at the noise which he made they were presently on foot, the servants coming in their shirts to learn what had happened.

"Come, thousand bombs! my friends, it's necessary that you should all search the country immediately; your young master is out of his mind. I see well that it's useless to hide it from you any longer, follow his steps, let each one take the road and follow him, though it be to the end of the world. I will come presently myself to join you."

So saying Mullern pushed them one over the other towards the country.

Some of them were mutinous, and observed that they could not go in their shirts, but Mullern with a kick sent them flying out of the door, and nobody could resist this last argument. Having sent his ambassadors into the country, Mullern hastened to return to Pauline, and to lavish upon her all the attention necessary to restore her. After a good deal of trouble she opened her eyes. Henri, was the first word she pronounced, when she perceived Mullern at her side.

"Yes, I notice that you are surprised to see me," said our hussar, "and I assure you that I

should like to be a hundred leagues away from you, but it must be confessed that Franck was right in saying that these things are determined by destiny."

Pauline did not understand the greater part of this speech, but Mullern explained to her what he wished to say, and the manner in which he had found her in the shrubbery.

"And Henri, what has become of him?" demanded Pauline.

"He feared my remonstrances, and he has taken flight; he ought, however, to know that, despite my air of severity, my heart isn't as hard as a rock." But Mullern did not yet suspect the enormity of Henri's fault. After endeavoring to console Pauline, he left her in her room to go in search of the fugitive. Pauline as soon as she was alone gave free vent to her tears. She feared and desired at the same time that Mullern should bring Henri; sometimes reason and duty made her dread his return; but love, stronger than all other feelings, always came uppermost, and finished by carrying her away. However, all the servants returned to the castle without bringing any news of Henri. The next day they made the same effort without any success. The days — the weeks passed, and he did not return. Mullern did not lose courage, and sometimes was absent for a week at a time in the hope of being more successful; but when two months had elapsed he began

to lose patience, and consigned to the worker of all evil him whom, at the bottom of his heart, he desired so much to recover.

"But after all, why should he fly like this," said Mullern to Pauline, when they were alone. "I had forbidden him to see you, it's true, but I didn't advise him to become a fool."

Pauline lowered her eyes and did not answer. Mullern seeing that his questions embarrassed her, changed the conversation, and endeavored to distract her. The poor child seemed in great need of distraction; she was no longer the Pauline that she had been a year ago, so fresh, so pretty, her beaming eyes indicating happiness and health; her tears had dimmed their brightness, her pale and withered skin betrayed her suffering of soul, and everything about her announced a victim of love. As time rolled on, the grief of Pauline seemed to augment; she passed her days shut up in her room, or weeping in the depths of the solitary shrubbery. Mullern supposed this was due to the trouble she experienced at Henri's flight. Our good hussar was scarcely gayer than herself, and hardly in a state to console her.

One evening when Mullern had left the castle to breathe the tranquil country air, he perceived from afar a woman whose disordered walk indicated some extraordinary design.

"Why," said Mullern, "who is this woman."

The darkness of the night, however, prevented

him from recognizing her, but, finally, he followed her, in order to satisfy his curiosity. The stranger rapidly crossed a little clump of wood which led to the edge of a pool situated at a short distance from the village. She took the most devious paths, appearing to fear that she should be perceived, and paused from time to time to see that she was not followed. Mullern at such times hid behind a tree, holding his breath, and making not the slightest movement. In this manner they arrived together at the edge of the water. Then the unknown paused on a kind of hillock which overlooked the pool, and fell on her knees. Mullern stopped also; a secret terror had seized his heart. Presently a plaintive voice pronounced the following words,—

"O my God, forgive the sin I am about to commit; take pity on my despair, and do not pour out your vengeance upon him who shared my crime, and for whom I sacrifice an existence which I have no longer the strength to support."

Mullern heard no further, having recognized the voice, he ran towards her whom he wished to save; but he was too late. Pauline, for it was she, had already thrown herself into the midst of the water. Our hussar, without waiting a single instant, threw aside his hat, his coat, and all that could embarrass him, and threw himself into the pond, reached the drowning woman, seized her forcibly, drew her towards the edge, and thanked

Heaven that it had seconded his efforts. Mullern laid Pauline on the earth, but she was inanimate, and her state demanded prompt attention. How could he give it, however. It was late, all the villagers were asleep; there was only one thing to do, and that was to return to the château. They were far away from it, and the good hussar felt harassed by all the shocks which he had experienced, but the desire to do a good action renewed his strength. He put Pauline on his shoulder, and charged with this precious burden courageously took the way to the castle. After an hour's walking Mullern reached the end of his journey; everybody had already gone to bed, but he always carried the key of the little door into the park. He placed Pauline on the ground and opened this door. On taking Pauline in his arms he had felt that her heart beat, and that she breathed slightly.

"Come," said he, "she is not dead, and I am repaid for my trouble."

The movement of walking effectually reanimated Pauline's senses, and when Mullern had placed her on her bed she opened her eyes. Had she not done so, he would have needed the help of others.

"Where am I?" said she, looking around her, with an expression in which astonishment and grief were mingled.

"In a place which you will not leave hereafter

without my permission," answered Mullern, in a severe tone.

"How did I get here?"

"How did you get here? You got here because I followed you, mademoiselle, and Heaven allowed me to arrive in time to prevent your crime. But now tell me how it happens that you were carried to such an excess of unreason? Whence this despair which agitates your mind? What frenzy troubles your reason? You are silent; speak, mademoiselle, it is not by silence that one excuses a crime like yours; yes, a crime, I repeat, and what can be the motive of it? It is always a crime to rid one's self of life. I esteem the unfortunate who bear their sorrows with courage, I despise those who deliver themselves by a cowardly action."

Pauline listened attentively to Mullern, and his words had the effect upon her that he expected. They softened her heart, and she burst into a shower of tears. As soon as Mullern saw her grief he felt that he must abandon his severity, and reproached himself for it.

"Come, I forgive you," said he, "but upon one condition."

"What is that?"

"It is that you tell me the motive of your despair, for it must be that you have one."

"Oh, do not force me to blush before you, in telling of my shame."

"You must do it, I tell you. Come, be more courageous."

"You order me. O my God! what will it cost me to do what he asks."

"Come, out with it."

"I am—"

"You are—"

"I am about to become a mother."

Mullern was stunned. Pauline hid her face in her hands.

"You are about to become a mother," said Mullern at last, rousing himself from his stupefaction; "and you wished to take your own life, unhappy woman! and you wished, also, to kill the innocent victim you bear within you. Ah, you are guiltier than I had thought."

"I feel only too deeply my crime, but, alas, this unfortunate creature which I should have deprived of life, is it not, before its birth, condemned to shame and contempt? The child of crime and of misfortune, will it ever dare to own the author of its being."

"What do you mean?"

"Must you learn, then, who is its father?"

"What, Henri, my pupil. O triple thunder! This cuts me to the quick. There is nothing left for me but a bullet of forty-eight."

Pauline's confession had deprived her of her last remnant of strength and she relapsed into unconsciousness on her bed. As for Mullern, his

spirits were too much depressed with what he had learned for him to be capable of seeing what was going on around him. Motionless before the hearth he looked without seeing, reflected without thinking, suffered without feeling, and the night rolled by without his awakening from his bewilderment. A double knocking on the door recalled Mullern to himself. He rubbed his eyes and seemed to awake from a painful dream, looked about him with an expression of surprise, and perceived Pauline, who was still in the same state. The sight of her recalled to the hussar all that had passed; two big tears escaped from his eyes. He dried them, twisted his mustache, and patiently went downstairs. They continued to knock with violence, the porter was slowly dressing himself, and Mullern, rendered impatient, opened the door. A courier put a note in his hand and departed rapidly, saying that there was no answer. Mullern held the letter in his hand and did not think of reading it, until, casting his eyes on the address he recognized the colonel's handwriting.

"Oh," said he rubbing his eyes to assure himself that he was not dreaming, "it is indeed from the colonel and addressed to me. By what chance does he know that I am in the castle? And this beast of a courier who went off like a bomb. I should like to question him. Come, let's read this; I feel that I tremble for the first time in my

life. If the colonel knows all that has happened, this letter is my condemnation. No matter, I deserve to be punished and I shall have the courage to execute myself if the colonel orders it."

So saying Mullern brusquely opened the letter and read the contents. As he read a change passed over his face, tears escaped from his eyes; but they were tears of joy, of pleasure, of tenderness. Hardly had he finished reading it, when he dashed like a madman up the staircase which led to Pauline's apartment.

"Hurrah! Victory!" cried Mullern, ascending four steps at a time. When he reached Pauline's room, her chambermaid had brought her to herself; she looked at Mullern in astonishment, she could not understand his extraordinary joy.

"Take it. Read it yourself," said Mullern to her, giving her the letter, "and you will see if I am wrong to be at the height of my joy."

But before explaining to the reader the reason of Mullern's sudden joy and the contents of the letter which had caused it, we must rejoin Colonel Framberg, whom we left ready to start for Paris.

CHAPTER XIV

Happiness. Uninteresting, but Necessary. A Blow from Fate

The colonel had listened with the greatest attention and interest to Henri's brief account of D'Ormeville's adventures and misfortunes. The narration awakened the utmost sympathy in his noble and generous soul and he had immediately conceived the plan of betaking himself to Paris, and of there taking all of the necessary steps towards learning what had become of his dear Henri's father. To tell the truth, the latter had already unsuccessfully made this research; but then, Henri knew nobody in Paris, and his extreme youth and inexperience were hardly likely to inspire those of whom he made his inquiries with confidence. The colonel, on the contrary, was of an age and a rank which could not fail to command respect and esteem; he obtained from prominent connections urgent letters to men in office, and had every hope of being more successful in his enterprise than had been his adopted son.

Once in Paris, Colonel Framberg acted with the utmost diligence in the matter in hand, and

on his arrival in Paris he immediately took measures to make the necessary researches, in order to learn what had become of D'Ormeville. His inquiries met with speedy success. The minister apprised the colonel that the one for whom he was searching was imprisoned at La Force, one of the principal prisons of the capital. D'Ormeville had been arrested on his arrival in Paris, and the sentence of death, which had been hanging over him for so many years, had been commuted to ten years in prison. This was a great concession in itself; and as the persons who had acted against D'Ormeville were no longer living, he hoped soon to recover his liberty. But in order to procure a pardon, it was necessary that the prisoner should have some one in France who would interest himself and take the necessary steps for his release. Unfortunately, D'Ormeville knew nobody, and he would probably have served the whole of his term in prison, if chance had not sent him a powerful protector in the person of the colonel. The latter occupied himself immediately in obtaining D'Ormeville's liberty, on the ground that the offence was not of so grave a nature as to merit such rigor, and that he had suffered enough by his exile of twenty years. The steps which the colonel was obliged to take consumed more time than he had believed possible. He had already been accorded permission to see D'Ormeville, but he would not present himself to the latter until he could carry his pardon.

What generous conduct towards a man who had been his rival, who had deprived him of the love of the woman whom he adored, and who was now going to take from him the one whom he regarded as his son! There exist few men like the colonel.

At last, after three months passed in inquiries and solicitations, Colonel Framberg obtained the liberty of Henri's father. What a moment for his generous soul! With what delight he went to the prison; the feeling that one has done a good action so amply repays one for all the trouble he has taken. D'Ormeville no longer expected his pardon. The unhappy man, seated in a corner of his prison, was thinking of his Pauline; the grief which he knew she would feel augmented the sadness of his situation. Suddenly, the door of his cell opened, a man whom he did not know, but whose face bespoke his goodness, presented himself before him — the reader may well believe that this was the colonel. He threw himself into D'Ormeville's arms, and the latter, astonished, did not know what to think of this.

"Let us embrace first," said the colonel, "we can make acquaintance afterwards. Meanwhile, here is the order for your release. I am Colonel Framberg, and I have obtained it for you."

D'Ormeville did not know whether he were fully awake. The name of the colonel, the word liberty, almost stunned him, but the colonel, in

consideration for his surprise, led him out of the prison, made him get into a coach, and conducted him to the hotel where he was staying.

"It is not a dream, then?" said D'Ormeville. "I am at liberty, and I owe it to you, Colonel."

"I can conceive your astonishment, my dear D'Ormeville, and I am going to explain matters to you, but, as the story I have to tell you is rather long, we will wait until we get to my hotel, where we can talk without being interrupted."

D'Ormeville consented to this, and on their arrival at the hotel the colonel ordered that no one should interrupt them, and related to D'Ormeville the events which we already know. How can we depict D'Ormeville's astonishment on learning that his son lived, and that he should soon see him. His joy was almost delirious. He threw himself into the colonel's arms, and called him his tutelary genius. Suddenly, he paused, and reflected deeply.

"What is the matter with you?" said the colonel. "What is the cause of your bewilderment?"

"Have you another son?" said D'Ormeville to him.

"No, I have none but Henri, who has taken the place of one to me."

"Henri! There is no further doubt of it, it is he!"

"What do you mean?"

"I know this beloved son, and Heaven chose him to save my life."

"Can it be? Henri has saved your life!"

"In a forest about six leagues distant from Strasburg I was about to fall a victim to two assassins, when Providence sent my son to save my life."

D'Ormeville was, in fact, he whom Henri had saved. Colonel Framberg was lost in admiration of the decrees of Providence, which had sent the son to succor the father. Then he continued his recital, which D'Ormeville had interrupted by his exclamation. When the latter learned of the unfortunate love of Pauline and Henri, and the grief which the colonel experienced because of this fatal passion, D'Ormeville interrupted him, saying, —

"Dry your tears, my friend, our children shall be restored to happiness and to love. Pauline is not my daughter."

"She is not your daughter!" cried the colonel, intoxicated with joy, "it is almost too good to believe. These dear children have had so much sorrow that I dare not yet believe in this happiness."

"It is the truth, but I confess it needs to be explained. Listen to me, and I will in my turn tell you all the events which have occurred since the moment when I separated from her whom I had called my wife."

History of D'Ormeville

"On leaving my dear Clémentine, I went to Vienna, there to offer my services to the emperor. War had been declared between Russia and Austria, and I had little trouble in getting myself accepted, and, in consideration of my volunteering, and of my birth, I was soon lieutenant in a regiment of hussars which was about to start on a campaign. I left with my company, and we encountered the enemy near a village between Novogrodek and Wilna. The battle was a bloody one, and the Russians were defeated, as I learned afterward. Having received a bullet wound at the commencement of action, I fell from my horse and was left as dead on the field of battle.

"A peasant who passed by me, long after the two armies had departed, perceived that I still breathed. He had the humanity to take me on his shoulder and carry me to his cottage, and there gave me every care to bring me back to life. I remained nearly a year with this good countryman, for it was not until that time that my wound was sufficiently healed to allow me to think of rejoining my flag. During my long illness, the chances of war had made the Russians masters of the village where I was stopping. They had established posts in all the places through which I would have had to pass in order to return to Austria, and I saw that I could not leave without exposing myself to almost inevitable danger.

"What could I do! My situation was frightful. I possessed but a small sum of money, and I did not wish to be any longer a charge to the brave man who had saved my life. There was but one course for me to take, and that was to work for a living, and I decided promptly to do this. The good peasant who had succored me found me some work at a farmer's in the neighborhood. I assumed the costume which suited my new state, and I put myself to work on that earth which is never ungrateful towards those who water it with their sweat. I lived peacefully enough for a long time, and became accustomed to my new existence; besides my remembrance of my Clémentine, and the hope of seeing her again enabled me to bear with courage my long exile. You know that on coming into Germany I dropped the name of D'Ormeville to take that of Christiern, and I was also known by this name in my new neighborhood.

"About half a league from the farm where I dwelt was a little castle belonging to a man by the name of Droglouski. This Droglouski was not liked in the neighborhood, and reports were circulated in regard to him to which I paid little attention. His castle was on an elevation from whence one could see all the surrounding country, and when my work permitted me I directed my steps towards it, and turning my eyes towards the place where my dear Clémentine dwelt, I

prayed heaven that it would soon permit me to see her whom I adored.

"I had noticed in my solitary walks a man whom I often met on the way, and who appeared to examine me attentively. I did not at first pay any great attention to him; however, impatient at always seeing this man on my walks, I asked the farmer if he knew him. From the portrait which I drew of him, he told me that it would be M. Droglouski's servant and confidant, and that he even recalled the fact that this man had come to the town and had put divers questions to the villagers in regard to me and my circumstances. Curious to know what he could possibly want of me, I resolved to speak to him the first time that I should meet him. The occasion was not very long in presenting itself. A few days only had passed, when, being one evening in the neighborhood of the castle, I saw my man about two steps from me. I at once approached him and informed him that I was very much at a loss to account for my meeting him so incessantly on my path, and that I begged he would explain to me the reason.

"'You shall know it,' he answered me in a gloomy voice, 'but as what I have to say to you is exceedingly important, will you consent to come this evening at midnight to this place. We need not fear being surprised, and I will tell you something that will interest you.'

"'Why not tell me now,' said I, surprised at the tone in which he spoke to me.

"'No,' said he, 'at midnight you shall know all, but do not fail to come here then, your life depends upon it!'

"Saying these words he departed, and left me in an astonishment which I cannot depict. 'Shall I be discovered?' I said to myself when alone, 'Ought I to go to this rendezvous?' I waited for a long time, and, finally, reflecting that he had told me that my life depended upon it, I presumed that he would not give me up unless I failed to keep my word, and I resolved to be punctual to the appointed hour. At midnight I was at the specified place, at a hundred paces from the castle, and soon saw my man coming towards me. He led me to a bank at the foot of a tree, and spoke to me as follows,—

"'You are an Austrian, and, in consequence, at war with the Russians. You have not a sou, and you are only awaiting a favorable occasion to return to your country. If you should be recognized you would be put to death immediately. I can give you up to your enemies and cause you to be led to the scaffold, and I will do this unless you consent to all that I am about to propose to you.'

"I saw that I had to do with a scoundrel, but my life was in his hands and it was necessary to dissimulate.

"'What do you require of me?' I said to him.

"'This,' he answered me, 'there lives in this castle, which you see before us, a child of three or four years, whose existence annoys several persons. We could have put it to death ourselves, but I have fixed upon you to do it, because this murder, if committed in the castle, would, perhaps, give rise to suspicion.'

"I shuddered with horror at this speech, but I hid my indignation and the scoundrel continued,—

"'It is unnecessary that you should know the motives of this vengeance. I forbid you to ever seek to learn them, for this curiosity would cost you your life, and if, in future years, you should be tempted to return to this country, for I presume you will go back to Austria as soon as peace is made, I forewarn you that your inquiries will be useless, for this castle will be abandoned, and you will find nobody here. It is for you to decide, and if you are willing to do what I wish you shall be generously recompensed. If you refuse, on the contrary, I will go and denounce you to the Russians, who occupy this country, and you cannot escape death.'

"'It needs no consideration,' said I to him, 'I accept.'

"'That's good enough. In that case, follow me, and I will give you the child.'

"'What! Immediately?'

"'Undoubtedly, the sooner the better.'

"I tremblingly followed the scoundrel who judged me capable of consenting to his odious project. He led me into the interior of the castle; a profound, a deep silence reigned there. Arriving in a lower room, he left me, telling me to await his return. I remained alone for some minutes, listening attentively that I might hear something that would disclose the mystery, but the profound and extraordinary silence made me judge that the man who had introduced me lived there alone, and I confess that then I formed the plan of delivering the earth of this monster, and of saving his innocent victim. But I was mistaken in my hope. My man returned, holding a child in his arms, and followed by another personage, who was masked, and who looked at me without speaking.

"'Wait, here is the child, and a purse full of gold,' said my first interviewer, 'you know what you have to do. Go! Leave this castle, and reflect well that if you do not execute our orders, death will follow on your treason.'

"I did not answer. I took the child and the purse, and my man accompanied me as far as the castle gate; there, having repeated his threats, he left me, and I found myself alone with the child. 'Poor little thing,' said I, examining her, for I saw it was a little girl — she could not be more than four years old — 'should I lose my life, I

will save you from the fury of your enemies.' My course was soon taken. If I remained in the village, I might expect to be arrested; I, therefore, resolved to seek another shelter. In truth, I might also be taken when fleeing, but I thought that Heaven would protect my actions, and that hope gave me courage. I journeyed several leagues without any danger, and then I came at last to an immense forest, where I thought I should do well to remain hidden for some time. The poor child whom Heaven had confided to me was the object of my tenderest solicitude. Alas, deprived of everything, I was obliged each evening to make her a cradle with branches from the trees. In the morning, before she had awakened, I went tremblingly to a peasant's cottage, and there bought the provisions necessary for our existence. By her innocent caresses the little one made me forget my misfortune. She called me her father, and I resolved to stand in his place. I named her Pauline, and I hoped that with the French name she would also possess the gayety and the grace of the women of my country. Finally, I received the recompense that always follows a good action. A fortnight had barely passed when I learned that the Austrians were advancing at a forced march towards the place where I had taken refuge. The Russians fled before their conquerors, and I soon saw myself in the midst of my comrades. I resumed the rank which I had occupied in the army,

but the care of my little Pauline embarrassed me greatly. By chance, I made the acquaintance of the respectable Madame Reinstard, who had followed her son, who was in the army. He had been killed, and she had fallen into a state of the deepest despair. I proposed to her that she should act as Pauline's mother, telling her that she was my daughter. She consented joyfully to do so, and started for Offenburg to settle herself in the neighborhood. I expected to go there to join her in a short time, and I hoped, also, that I should see Clémentine, but, alas, an officer who had passed by the Castle von Framberg informed me that she, believing me dead, like everyone else, had married Colonel Framberg, that she had borne a son, and that she had died after several years of marriage. This news defeated my plans for happiness. Nothing remained to me but the hope of rejoining my Clémentine. Several battles followed, and I sought death in the ranks of the enemy, but destiny was deaf to my wishes and I found nothing but glory. I became captain, and time and the remembrance of my little Pauline assuaged my despair. I made my winter quarters with her who believed me to be her father, and I took care that she should not learn anything to the contrary, that I might keep from her sorrows which could only have cast a gloomy tint over the beautiful days of her youth.

"I was as happy as it was possible for me to be,

I looked upon Pauline as my daughter, and the idea never came to me that my child and Clémentine's could be this Henri von Framberg whom everybody called your son. The desire of seeing my country came at last to disturb my tranquillity. You know the rest, Colonel, and I can never sufficiently express all the gratitude I owe you."

Who can depict the colonel's joy on learning that Pauline was not Henri's sister?

"They are then free to love," said he to D'Ormeville; "for I do not doubt that you will approve their union."

"Oh, Colonel," answered the latter, "You cannot believe that I find my son only to make him unhappy. Besides you have still the rights of a father over him, since you have held the place of one for so long a time. You shall keep them, and I shall regard Henri as unworthy of my love if he has not always the same affection for you."

The two friends shook hands cordially, vowing reciprocally to have towards Henri and Pauline a father's tenderness.

"But, by the way," said the colonel, "have you never taken any steps to discover who were the parents of this poor little girl, and learn the cause of the hatred of those monsters who wished her death?"

"I confess to you that I have never sought to discover them. Besides I thought I should be taking useless trouble to try to do so. It would

be necessary to return to a country where I knew no one, to look there for people who certainly would not await my return to flee from a place they had so much reason to abandon as they told me. Later, I reflected on the situation of my dear Pauline; she was happy, peaceful with me, and I should, perhaps, disturb her tranquillity and reawaken the hatred of her enemies against her, by seeking to make her known to her parents, who evidently interested themselves little about her since they had never taken any steps to recover her."

"You are right as to the first point, my dear D'Ormeville; but, as to the second, I am not of your opinion, for now that Pauline has protectors in ourselves, friends who know how to guard her against the snares of these vile enemies, what can you fear for her if we seek to discover her birth in order to make them restore her fortune? For she should have one, I don't doubt my friend; it is always gold that causes men to commit the greatest crimes."

"I think with you, but what can we do? What means can we employ?"

"We will reflect on it. I remember — yes, perhaps those for whom we are searching are not unknown to me."

"What do you say?"

"You remember your adventure in the forest near Strasburg, when Henri saved your life?"

"I shall never forget it!"

"Have you not reflected that these two men, who were not ordinary murderers, might be the envoys of those from whom you received the child, and who wish to punish you for disobeying their orders?"

"I thought so at the moment; but how could I suppose that I should meet in France, and near my residence, those people who had so much cause to flee from me?"

"Certainly they would not have sought you; but if they met you here they believed it necessary for their safety to sacrifice you. Remember, they thought you an Austrian by birth, and that their not thinking to find you in France was a reason for their taking up their abode here."

"You open my eyes, Colonel, and I have no doubt now that the scoundrels who wished to take my life are the same who had sworn death to my dear Pauline."

"Learn then, how I hope to discover them. Henri, in listening to the conversation of these two wretches, had had time to examine their faces; judge of his surprise when, on coming to the little house where I had been hospitably entertained, situated in the midst of the forest, he recognized in the master of the dwelling that one of the assassins who escaped his just punishment by flying at Henri's approach."

"Can it be possible? And this man?"

"He could not recognize Henri, for he had not had time to look at him; but he was suspicious of him, because when we left the next day he had already quitted the house."

"I don't doubt but that Henri can tell us what we are so interested in knowing; but where can we find him now?"

"We shall do so later, I don't doubt. In the first moment, when Henri told me, I refused to punish a man to whom I owed hospitality, but now I know all his villany I will discover him if I follow him to the ends of the earth."

"I will second you, Colonel, and we shall yet unmask the villains."

The two friends agreed on this point, that it was urgent that they should rejoin their children; and the colonel, who had learned that Mullern and Henri were at the castle, first wrote a letter to the former in which he detailed all that had happened to him. He charged him to share with his children the pleasure of such happy tidings, that they might be the sooner reunited. He invited Mullern to come with Henri and Pauline to meet them. This letter despatched, the colonel and his friend made every preparation for their departure, and were soon on the way to the Castle von Framberg.

Leaving them to travel we will return to the castle. When Pauline had read the colonel's letter, she shared Mullern's transports of joy;

and her emotion was so great that she thought it would be fatal to her, and again lost consciousness.

"Come, triple musket shot!" said Mullern, turning everything upside-down, "this is what I've done with my devilish stupid head, thinking to give her much pleasure, I've sent her into the other world without a passport."

However, despite Mullern's fears, Pauline regained consciousness and found herself better than ever.

"Thousand bombs!" said our hussar, "don't begin any more faintings or I shall end by losing my wits over it."

Pauline wished to dress at once and go to meet her benefactors.

"One moment," said Mullern, "I have no desire that you should be ill on the road, and as that would surely happen we won't start until the day after tomorrow, because you are too weak to travel."

Despite all that Pauline could say as to her health, Mullern was inexorable.

"I am sorrier than you are," said he, "for I burn to see my colonel, but experience has made me wise, we must be patient."

Her first transport of joy past, Pauline sighed and looked sadly to heaven; on his part, Mullern became pensive and put his cuff to his eye, as was his habit when anything affected him; after half

an hour spent in profound silence they looked at each other.

"I divine all you wish to say to me," said Mullern to Pauline, "you had forgotten it in the first moment of our joy; but that could not last."

"Alas! Where is he now?"

"He is weeping in some corner like a penitent! Oh, if he had only had the courage to stand firm and await events, he would not have put us in our present embarrassment; for how shall we appear without him before those who are awaiting us? What will the colonel say?"

"What will his father say, who is hoping soon to embrace him?"

"What shall we say, if they demand the cause of his flight. Thousand squadrons! I believe that I dread seeing my colonel, although I was impatient a moment ago to go and throw myself on his breast."

Finally, Mullern reflected that, aided by the colonel and D'Ormeville, he should easily discover Henri, and that when he had found him he should be perfectly happy. Quieted by these reflections, he busied himself in consoling Pauline, and did so without trouble, for she was only too pleased to believe as he did.

The two days passed and Franck, whom Mullern had charged with the preparations for departure, came to tell him that the post-chaise was waiting.

"Come, let us start!" said Mullern, and he sent to look for Pauline. Meanwhile, our hussar prepared a speech for the colonel, for he dreaded the first moment of the interview, and went to the castle gate, looked out over the country and said to himself,—

"Where is he now, the demon? What is he doing now. Ah! if he knew his happiness. But, no, he likes better to run about the country and make me swear, than to return to me. This pupil of mine has given me a good deal of trouble."

Pauline was not long in coming down; she glanced sadly at the castle, where, in so short a time, so much had happened to her. Mullern made her get into the carriage, saying to her,—

"I have a secret presentiment that we shall soon return here happier than we are in leaving."

"May your presentiment prove true," answered Pauline, sighing.

Mullern placed himself beside her, Franck mounted as postilion, and they departed from the castle.

The post-chaise only stopped once to change horses until they reached Blamont; there our travellers alighted at the post inn, with the design of passing the night there. The inn was filled with travellers, and the inn people were running from one side to the other, not knowing whom to answer first. Mullern had some little trouble in getting to the innkeeper; at last he met him.

"Monsieur Host," said Mullern, "give us some rooms with beds and supper as quickly as you can."

"Mons-monsieur Hus-hus-hussar, I will do—I will do so with much-much—with much pleasure, but it's-it's-it's because."

"Well, it's because what? Try to speak more clearly."

"I-I-I-have only one room, very-very pretty, with a bed."

"Come, this is the devil!" said Mullern, "How shall we manage?"

However, Pauline was too greatly fatigued to go farther; Mullern engaged the room that was left, hoping that he and Franck could find some place to sleep, if it were only a hayloft.

He signed to the innkeeper to conduct them to the chamber in question, for he wished to prevent the man from stuttering, which made him impatient.

Pauline was conducted to a pretty room which looked on the street; and, as she would take nothing, Mullern wished her good-night, warning her that he would come for her the next morning when he was ready to start.

Mullern and Franck, who had no desire to go to bed without supper, asked the innkeeper where they could be served most promptly.

"If-if-if these gentlemen would come to the-the-the—to the-the—"

"Thousand bombs, why don't you make an end of it?"

"To the ta-ta-ta—"

"To the devil with the cursed stammerer with his ta-ta, his if-if and his the-the; I believe he'll amuse himself next by solfa-ing the psalms of David."

"Monsieur, the more impatient you are with him the worse he talks," said Franck.

"That's very agreeable! In that case take the explanation on yourself, for he incites me to deal him a few blows with the flat of my sabre to loosen his tongue."

Franck was more adroit than Mullern, for the innkeeper led them to the table d'hôte, where they were having supper.

"Come, we'll go to the table d'hôte," said Mullern, "afterwards we'll see about our beds."

The room where they supped was occupied by many people; however, as they entered, Mullern observed a man who left the table hastily, putting his handkerchief to his face; our hussar did not pay any great attention to him, and went to take the place at the table which the traveller had left.

Mullern and Franck had been supping quietly for some minutes, troubling themselves very little about the other travellers, who were chatting together, when two men dressed like wagoners came into the room, and seated themselves opposite Mullern and his companion. Conversation soon

started between them and these new comers; they appeared to be jolly fellows, drinking hard and talking a great deal. They drew Mullern out about his battles, and when the latter once began to talk it was not long before he grew heated, and believed himself still in action. The two travellers appeared to have much pleasure in listening to him, and incited him to continue; while talking, they drank, and the conversation was prolonged until such a late hour that perhaps Mullern would have passed the night under the table if he had not seen that Franck was already snoring at his side.

"We must go to bed," said Mullern rising from the table.

He walked a little unsteadily, but was still able to support himself; the two travellers called the innkeeper, and he took a good deal of trouble to find a room for Mullern and his companion. Our hussar thanked them, slapping them amicably on the shoulder, and swearing that they were good fellows. Thanks to the attention of the two travellers, Mullern and Franck had a little room, under the roof, it is true, but they would have slept on the roof had it been necessary. Some one led them to their room, and they were soon snoring in unison.

Ten o'clock was striking when Mullern awoke the next day.

"Hang it!" said he, "this is fine conduct, but

now I remember that yesterday evening there were two devils of men who made us drink like templars. Come, thousand bombs! We must make up for lost time."

So saying, Mullern aroused Franck, who was still sleeping, and they dressed hastily.

"I am certain," said Mullern, "that Mademoiselle Pauline has been waiting for us for more than two hours, and we must try not to tax her patience still further."

He ran downstairs as fast as possible, and went to that part of the inn where Pauline had slept. He rapped several times at the door but received no answer.

"She is tired of waiting, and has no doubt gone to walk in the garden," said Mullern to himself; and he went quickly down the staircase, and crossed the yard to go into the garden. On the way he met the innkeeper, who stopped him.

"Where-where are you go-go-going, monsieur?"

"Hang it! I am going to look for the young lady who slept in the main building, and who is not in her room; she is probably in the garden."

"Not at-not at- not at all. Monsieur knows that she-she is gone."

"What gone? No, triple thunder! I don't believe it, and it cannot be. When did she go? How? With whom?"

"Just-just-just now."

"Is it possible?"

"With a man, who-who-who—"

"Go to the devil with your who-who-whos," said Mullern, transported with anger, and he rudely pushed the host who fell on the back of a big dog lying in the yard, which, frightened by this unforeseen attack, bit the innkeeper on the leg. Mullern, not doubting that there was something extraordinary in all this, took the course of running after Pauline.

"Which way did she go?" asked he of a young servant who was seated before the door.

"On the road to Lunéville, monsieur."

Immediately our hussar jumped on the first horse he came to, and dashed down the road to Lunéville.

"She has only just left, they assured me," said Mullern galloping, "so she can't have got very far yet. I should have waited for Franck to come with me, but that devil of a man made me so impatient."

As Mullern finished his reflections he seemed to hear shouts at some distance. He turned towards the locality from which they came, and saw a post-chaise standing in the road.

"Let's see," said Mullern, "if it be the one I am looking for." Immediately he put his horse at full speed, and saw a woman who was about to throw herself out of the carriage, but was prevented by a man.

"That woman is Pauline," said Mullern; the sound of two swords clashing caused him to turn his head, and he saw two men who were fighting furiously.

"Good," said he, "one of the two is Pauline's defender."

But our hussar, embarrassed, did not know to which side to turn his steps. Finally, he thought that he must first save the man who was exposing his life to protect Pauline. He ran towards the combatants, but, oh, new surprise, one of them was M. de Monterranville, whom Mullern had so greatly wished to kill; and the other — unhoped for happiness — was his dear Henri, for whom they had mourned so long.

By what chance he found himself there, and so fortunately at just the right moment to prevent his Pauline from being abducted by a scoundrel who desired her ruin, is what we shall tell the reader in the following chapter. But for that it will be necessary to return for a moment to our hero, as he departed so suddenly from the castle.

CHAPTER XV

Short and Sad. A Happy Meeting

It is necessary to recall to the reader's memory the fact that Henri left Castle Framberg in the middle of the night on which his interview with Pauline had taken place in the clump of shrubbery, and that he was then in a state of bewilderment and despair which did not allow him to reflect where he was going, nor to care what might become of him. The remembrance of the fault, nay, crime, he had committed disturbed his reason and depressed his soul.

"O my God," said he, "you who have given me a heart capable of loving so passionately and a soul too feeble to master a love which, though honorable and innocent at its inception, circumstances have rendered it criminal to cherish, deprive me of life or erase from my mind the image of her who is at once my torture and my happiness, and whom my folly has perhaps led to the tomb."

Having walked all day across the fields, Henri, incapable longer of resisting his fatigue, stopped at the cottage of a woodman; he was then in the middle of the Black Forest, a short distance from

Freudenstadt. Poor Henri, who was just recovering from illness, was not in a state to withstand a great sorrow, and hardly was he in the good peasant's house when he fell ill a second time. However, on entering the house Henri had forbidden his host to say that he was lodging a traveller, and the former had religiously guarded his secret. This was why Mullern, in his frequent excursions, had not discovered Henri at the woodman's.

The good hussar hardly imagined that his dear pupil was so near him; that a burning fever consumed him, and that, prostrated by grief and suffering, he had no one to solace him but a wretched woodman who himself lacked everything. Mullern would have flown to him that he might watch him day and night, but destiny had ordered otherwise.

At the end of six weeks Henri was able to leave the Black Forest. He said good-by to his host, and left, without knowing whither he should go; wishing, however, to place some distance between himself and the castle, he took the road to France and stopped some time at Strasburg. He went to lodge in the house where he had found his dear Pauline for the second time, and in which he had passed the happiest moments of his life, near her whom he then called his wife. After remaining there for two months, our young man resolved, in order to distract himself, to go to Paris. His

design was also to make further researches in that city for his father, whom he ardently longed to see and to know. He was ignorant of the fact that his generous benefactor had charged himself with that care and had been successful.

Chance willed it that Henri should stop at Blamont, in the same inn as Mullern and his companions. It was he who was seated at the host's table when they entered. Henri recognized Mullern immediately, but not wishing to be seen by him he hastily left, putting his handkerchief before his face. When he had reached his chamber he thought that perhaps Pauline had accompanied Mullern, and unable to resist his curiosity he went down to question the servant of the inn, who told him that a young lady, whom she depicted to him, had arrived, and that she was sleeping in a room on the first floor. When Henri was sure that Pauline, Mullern and Franck were travelling together he sought to divine the motive of their journey, and could find no other except that they were still in pursuit of him. Firmly resolving not to show himself, he went up to his chamber, reflecting on this meeting, but the idea that his Pauline was resting under the same roof as himself would not permit him to take a moment's rest.

The next morning Henri rose at the break of day; unable to resist the desire to see Pauline for a moment, he placed himself before the door

of the inn, and impatiently awaited the moment of her leaving. After waiting for a long time he began to lose courage and was about to leave the place when the woman he so ardently desired to see passed before him; but Mullern and Franck were not with her. One man only, a man whom Henri did not know, appeared with her. Astonished at what he saw, our hero followed them at a safe distance; arrived at the edge of a wood two men darted out on Pauline and bore her to a post-chaise which was near them. In vain Pauline struggled and called for help; they put her in a carriage, and the man who had brought her to the rendezvous mounted as postilion, whipped up his horses, and they rapidly departed.

Henri had run to Pauline's assistance, but he was at too great a distance to hope to be able to take her away from her adversary; however, fury lent him wings, he ran so swiftly that he caught up with the carriage, then he shouted to the postilion to stop; the latter did not listen to him and continuing to go on as fast as before, Henri employed the only means which remained to him in order to save his darling. He aimed one of his pistols at the postilion, who fell dead on the highway; immediately the carriage stopped, a man alighted like a madman and ran at Henri, sword in hand. Henri recognized him at once; it was M. de Monterranville, it was the assassin of the forest.

"Come, wretch," said Henri to him.

PHOTOGRAVURE FROM ORIGINAL DRAWING BY ALBERT DE FORD PITNEY.

[illegible] impatiently awaited the inc[illegible] After waiting for a long t[illegible] [illegible]rage and [illegible] out to [illegible] [illegible] the woman he so [illegible]ently des[illegible] [illegible] before him; but [illegible]ern and [illegible] [illegible] her. One man only, a man w[illegible] [illegible] not know, appeared with her. As[illegible] [illegible] what he saw, our hero followed them. [illegible] distance; arrived at the edge of a wood [illegible] [illegible] out on Pauline and bore her to a pos[illegible] [illegible] which was near them. In vain Pauli[illegible] [illegible] and called for help; they put her in [illegible] and the man who had brought her to [illegible] [illegible] mounted as postilion, whipped up h[illegible] [illegible] rapidly departed.

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"Come, wretch," said Henri to him, "come, and receive the punishment of all your crimes."

He awaited his adversary with a firm foot, and they attacked each other with equal fury. At this moment our hussar appeared at the place of the combat.

"O you gallows bird," said Mullern, running towards the combatants, "to fight with my pupil. Wait, we shall soon see if our sabres are sharp."

But Mullern arrived too late to have the pleasure of using his sabre, for, as he was speaking, Henri gave M. de Monterranville a stroke of the sword which extended him at our hussar's feet.

"Bravo! Bravo! my dearest Henri," said Mullern, falling on his pupil's neck, "this renders you worthy of me, for the scoundrel there fought furiously. But I see another of them who is still seeking to escape, and I'll make that my affair."

Saying these words, Mullern galloped towards the man who had guarded Pauline during the combat, and who had taken flight as soon as he saw his master lying on the ground. As he was greatly in advance of Mullern he was about to escape, when our hussar perceived in the distance a post-chaise which was coming in the direction in which his man was escaping.

"Bar the way! Stop that rascal there," shouted Mullern. Whether they heard him, or whether they divined what was wanted, the carriage stopped. Two men alighted to stop the villain

whom they seized, Mullern advanced to thank the travellers, and was greatly delighted at recognizing Colonel von Framberg and his friend. The colonel and D'Ormeville, surprised at this meeting, asked him a thousand questions.

"Come," said Mullern, "follow me, you shall see them, you will learn something fine about that rascal, De Monterranville, but we must not let this fellow escape; we shall learn from him all the details of this abduction."

The two friends understood nothing of all this, but nevertheless followed Mullern, who led them to the scene of the fight, where Henri was engaged in calming his dear Pauline's fear. Poor Henri was at the height of his joy, for as she threw herself into his arms she had said, "You are not my brother — wait here is your father," she added, recognizing D'Ormeville.

"Can it be? Great God! is it you?" and Henri was already in his father's embrace. Joy carried them to the borders of delirium.

The colonel, Henri, D'Ormeville, Pauline, and Mullern threw themselves into each others' arms. They were reunited; the two young people could love without crime, after so much grief, so many reverses; their hearts, so long oppressed, could hardly support this excess of happiness, and tears of tenderness bathed their eyelids.

"Thousand million cartridges, we are victors!" said Mullern, throwing his shako into the air,

"but not without trouble, for it has taken us a long while to carry the place."

When their first transports became a little calm, the travellers began to think of leaving the neighborhood and continuing their way to the Castle von Framberg, but a groan which they heard made them turn their heads; they perceived that M. de Monterranville still lived, and was calling them to come to his aid.

"We must not abandon this man," said the colonel, "his confession will be of great service to us, as we shall finally learn what was the origin of our dear Pauline."

Everybody approved of what the colonel said, and they went towards the wounded man.

"I feel," said he, "that I have only a few moments to live; but as my declaration will establish the fortune of this young woman whom I have persecuted, take me to the nearest place, and there, before a lawyer, I will tell you, if I have the strength, the story of my unfortunate existence."

They hastened to fulfill the desires of the dying man. Mullern and Franck made a litter, on which he was placed. The postilion, who was dead, was left on the place until such time as the magistrate should come to the spot. They took with them the other accomplice of the wounded man, and resumed their way to Blamont, which the travellers had not left. On arriving at the inn the

colonel sent in search of a doctor, a lawyer and witnesses. The doctor, on examining M. de Monterranville's wound, announced that he had but a few moments to live, and that if they had need of his declaration, it was necessary to profit by them. Everybody immediately gathered in the sick man's room, who made with great difficulty the following recital, —

History of M. de Monterranville.

"Now that death hovers over my head, and my being is about to suffer dissolution, I shudder in retracing all the crimes which jealousy and cupidity have caused me to commit; the bandage has fallen from my eyes, remorse tears my soul, and I cannot longer deceive myself.

"Ah, how terrible are the last moments of a criminal! He is devoid of all consolation — the world which he leaves looks upon him only with horror, and the remembrance of a good action is lacking to alleviate his torture.

"O you whom I have persecuted from infancy, interesting woman, how you will blush to recognize an uncle in the wretch before you!"

"My uncle!" cried Pauline, in surprise.

"Her uncle?" said all those present. The wounded man made a sign to them to listen, and continued in these words, —

"My true name is Droglouski; I was born at Smolensko; my father, the palatine, was im-

mensely rich and had only two children, myself and a sister two years younger.

"From my earliest infancy I bore the most violent hatred to my sister, because I foresaw that she would share with me our father's rich heritage, which cupidity led me to desire to possess entirely.

"Unfortunately I took into my service a man named Stoffar, who was the vilest scoundrel on the earth, Perceiving my hatred for my sister, he flattered my passions, knowing that by this means he could win my confidence and soon become my intimate confidant.

"Belliska, my sister, was each day the subject of my jealousy and wickedness. She suffered without complaining all the ills which I inflicted upon her. But whether my father was informed of it, or whether he divined my odious character, he bequeathed me only a third of his fortune, gave the rest to my sister and ordered me to leave the country where he lived. I departed, with rage in my heart and swearing to be revenged, and I went with Stoffar to a little isolated castle which I bought, near Wilna, where I retired in order that I might be free to meditate on the manner in which I could ruin her whom I detested. I had been nearly a year in that situation when I was apprised of my father's death. This news, instead of softening me only increased my hatred of Belliska, and confirmed me in my design of bring-

ing about her ruin. She had become one of the richest heiresses in Russia, and her fortune was the object of all my hopes, for I had already almost entirely dissipated the property I had received. While I was deliberating with Stoffar as to the course I wished to take, my sister was married to a young Russian officer whom she loved. This event redoubled my despair.

"'We have delayed too long, monsieur,' said Stoffar to me, 'you must move, and you must follow my advice. Go first to see your sister, pretend you have forgotten the differences between you and exhibit towards her the most tender friendship.' I followed his counsel without learning his plan. My sister, always good, received me with open arms, and presented me to her husband, who accorded me a flattering welcome. They invited me to spend some months with them and I consented to do so.

"Shortly, however, all our plans were still further crossed by the birth of a daughter to the young couple, whom they named Eliska. That was you, unhappy Pauline, and as soon as you entered the world I vowed toward you a most implacable hatred.

"Chance, which favored my plans, caused the Count Beniouski, your father, to be called on to put himself at the head of his regiment, which was about to fight against the Swedes. My sister separated from her husband, shedding bitter tears;

the latter begged me not to leave her during his absence, and to act as her protector. I promised him; alas, he did not know the monster to whom he had confided her. Misfortune still pursued Belliska, her husband was killed in his first battle; this news overwhelmed me with joy, for I saw myself relieved of one obstacle to my fortune. I was tired of feigning for my sister a friendship which my heart was far from feeling. I wished besides to enjoy her fortune, and Stoffar told me that it was time to move. I am now going to make you shudder with horror, but I cannot longer defer the confession of an abominable crime. Learn, then, that a poisoned draught disembarrassed me forever of her whom I hated. You shudder, hear me to the end. In order to avoid all suspicion, I was careful to choose a slow poison for my victim; she lingered for six months before dying. During this time I redoubled my attentions to her in order to gain her confidence.

"My sister, feeling her end approach, was persuaded that it was grief which she felt at the death of her husband that was leading her to the tomb. She saw me about her and recommended her daughter to me; she appointed me the child's tutor, and died without suspecting that her brother was her murderer.

"There remained, then, only the little Eliska whose existence prevented me from inheriting my sister's wealth. I brought her to my isolated cas-

tle in order that I might there decide her fate. Stoffar counselled me to make away with her; but, by an excess of prudence which became fatal to me I wished that he should charge some unfortunate stranger, whose discretion we could not doubt, with the commission of this new crime.

"You will remember, sir," said Droglouski, addressing himself to D'Ormeville, "how Stoffar discovered you, and how he judged that you were the one who was necessary to us for the execution of our plans. We believed that you were in the service of Austria, we believed that you were an Austrian; my design being to settle in France, I was not apprehensive of meeting you again; besides you only saw me masked when we brought you the child.

"This affair ended we gave out that my niece was dead, and I inherited all the property of my sister; my most ardent desire was to leave the country which was the scene of all my crimes; I sold my properties and went to France with Stoffar. I bought near Strasburg the little house which you know, its isolated situation suited me, and I retired there from time to time when I was tired of the pleasures and debaucheries to which I gave myself up when in Paris with my worthy confidant. I have only to relate to you the events in which I have taken part.

"One day Stoffar recognized in Strasburg, in M. d'Ormeville, the one to whom we had confided

my sister's child. 'It is necessary that we should kill him,' he said to me immediately, 'for sooner or later I shall be met and recognized by this man and I shall be lost.' My soul shrunk from this new crime, but I feared Stoffar too much to resist him, and your death was resolved upon. Heaven, however, would not permit the accomplishment of this crime. You were saved by this young man whom you call your son, and Stoffar was killed. As for me I took refuge in my dwelling, pleased enough at being freed from my accomplice.

"Several months after this event you came, monsieur," said he to Henri, "to my house to seek Colonel Framberg; your disturbance, your emotion when you saw me, did not escape me; I did not doubt that you recognized me, and I listened to your conversation with this brave hussar in order to confirm my suspicions. Hardly had I heard you, when I lost my presence of mind, and fled in the middle of the night. When I had a little recovered from my fright I resolved to know what you would do, and if you would not seek to injure me; consequently, I disguised myself as a peasant and followed you and your friend Mullern in your journey. You went to the Castle von Framberg and I established myself in the neighborhood; I learned there of your love affair with her whom you believed your sister, and since I knew the father of that young person had borne

the name Christiern, that he came from Russia, and that he was an officer, I did not doubt that she was my niece. From there on, madame, you can divine the object of all my proceedings and I swore to have you in my power. Fearing greatly that if you recovered your protector he would bring me to ruin, for gold I induced two wretches to aid me in my plans, but it was not easy to abduct you from the castle. I was, however, on the point of going there when you started in a post-chaise with Mullern and Franck. I followed you closely; but it was not until we came to this inn that I found a means of effecting my design. My two confederates were to make your companions drink, that they might not spoil our affair.

"The next morning one of them knocked at your door; it was already late and you had awaited your companions for a long time. He told you that they had mended the post-chaise which had been a little damaged, and that they were awaiting you a few steps from here. You believed him and you allowed yourself to be led into the snare which I had laid for you, and which would have proved successful had not Heaven, weary of my crimes, sent your liberators."

Here M. de Monterranville, or rather Droglouski, terminated his recital, which had vividly agitated his audience. The lawyer had transcribed it word for word; the wounded man signed it and had a codicil added, stating that his niece was his

only heir, and that she would find in the cottage in the forest all that remained of the immense fortune, three-fourths of which he had not yet spent.

This business once terminated, our friends left a man, the sight of whom could only be painful to them, and especially to Pauline, to whom he was so nearly related. But hardly had they left him when they were informed that he was no more.

"A good riddance," said Mullern, "I hope that we shall not meet his like again." Pauline grieved a little for him, not that she could feel the least affection for him, but he was the only relation she had ever known.

Having nothing more to keep them at Blamont our friends took the road for the Castle von Framberg, where they arrived the next day. With what delight they returned to these places of which each had the most tender memories. The colonel and D'Ormeville united our two lovers, and marriage hid the faults of their love. Henri and Pauline at length became happy, and always remained with their benefactors and fathers. The good Mullern passed his life with them, getting tipsy sometimes, and swearing always; faults to be pardoned in one who possessed such fine qualities.

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